

# THE HELPER

A Handbook for Sunday School Teachers  
and Parents

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1899

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*EDITED BY*

MARIAN PRITCHARD

('AUNT AMY')

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'The lamp of the Beginning waits to burn  
In every breast. Whence may we bring the fire?'

—D. A. Wasson.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

ESSEX HALL, ESSEX STREET, STRAND, LONDON, W.C.

'MAKER of all things, loving all Thy creatures,  
God of all goodness, infinite in mercy,  
Changeless, eternal, holiest and wisest,  
Hear Thou Thy children.

'We are Thy children, asking Thee to bless us,  
Banded together for a full obedience,  
Mutual help and mutual refreshing,  
Lord, in Thy service.

'Childhood shall learn to know Thee and revere Thee ;  
Manhood shall serve Thee, strong in power and knowledge ;  
Old age shall trust Thee, having felt Thy mercy,  
E'en mid the shadows.'

*D. Walmsley.*

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#### TO THE READER,

The kind reception given to the first Annual Volume of THE HELPER encourages us to hope that our readers will welcome its successor as a trustworthy friend; and that they will continue to find in these pages, as in those of the last Year-book, some practical assistance in their work of helping the young life around them to be stronger and more vigorous in its upward growth.

We are anxious to help all Sunday School Teachers; we are equally anxious to help also the families of our congregations. Nearly fifty years ago a little weekly leaflet was published, (bound afterwards in yearly volumes) called Pleasant Pages. It contained an hour's lesson for every day in the week, on different subjects, which were intended for the use of those parents who wished to devote a little time regularly to the mental and moral development of their children in a systematic way. Many of us, who were children then, look back on Pleasant Pages with gratitude; and we have often thought that it might prove acceptable if we could arrange a weekly series of Sunday

Lessons, for the benefit of parents who desire to do something towards the training of the spiritual life of their young people, and who yet find it difficult to work out a scheme of lessons for themselves. Many fathers and mothers do this with their children when *young*; but as a rule, they leave it off at the exact point when such intercourse is of the greatest importance; I mean when the age of childhood is passing and when the higher faculties are beginning to grow stronger, and therefore need wise and careful tending. The Year of Sunday Lessons (page 22) is intended for young people between twelve and eighteen years of age; and the series has been compiled quite as much with a view to their use in home-circles as for Sunday School Classes. It seems strange to have to emphasize this point, which indeed may be called a self-evident proposition; but the truth is, we are apt to think that our own young people's higher training may be left to care for itself, and does not need that guidance and culture which we recognize as necessary in the senior classes of our Sunday Schools! We should be glad indeed if we may be allowed to be THE

HELPER in some Home Circles at least; and we sincerely believe that, if the fifty-two selections, which have been carefully prepared, are used with intelligence, the result at the end of the year will be a distinct gain all round. For it always remains true that in teaching others we learn much ourselves; and the gain will be not merely an increase of knowledge, but what is of infinitely more importance—an increase of understanding of one another's deeper nature; which will mean the drawing of parent and child together in closer bonds of sympathy and love, thus forming the best bulwark against temptation and sin that our young people can possess.

We have been somewhat astonished lately to find how few books of reference are commonly at hand—even in this age of cheap books—for the service of the teacher. We have therefore endeavoured to make many of the articles in this volume help the others; so that examples and amplification of one lesson may frequently be found by reference to an article in another part of the book, the page, in many cases, being indicated.

We are glad to take this opportunity of thanking most cordially all our 'Helpers,' not only for their valuable contributions, but also for the hearty and generous manner in which they responded to our call for assistance.

The one point to which the attention of a 'would-be' good teacher needs always to be drawn, is that he or she must not be content with just thinking about the next lesson to be given; the

question must be carefully asked, and its answer patiently sought, 'What kind of boys or girls have I to teach? how can I "get at them"?' We should ridicule the idea of giving a baby roast beef for its dinner instead of milk food; and yet roast beef is very good in itself. And so it is with mental and spiritual food; it needs not only to be good, but it must also be such as the scholar is able to digest. The following pages may assist, and we hope *will* assist, the teacher to make a wise selection, for there is something in them which should meet the requirements of all ages, from childhood to adolescence; but, after all, these helps are of little value unless the teacher comes to them with a receptive mind and an earnest will. To attempt to teach others is not an easy task; but, then, what work worth the doing, is easy? The reason why now and again we hear Sunday school teaching referred to in slighting and almost contemptuous language, is because, unfortunately, young men and women do sometimes take up the work in a superficial and half-hearted fashion; and then they are apt to grumble when they find that it is all only worth what it has cost; that is, Nothing. Let us, therefore, see to it that we never, by our careless negligence, make Sunday school work become mean or trivial; but, putting our whole heart into what we have undertaken, may we do our very utmost to help our scholars to grow in goodness, in reverence, and in love.

THE EDITOR.



## The Sunday School and the Home.

WORDS TO PARENTS AND TEACHERS.



EVERYONE knows that there are difficulties of many kinds connected with Sunday school work. But we know also that difficulties in a good cause can always be overcome. There are some which arise from its inherent circumstances; there are some which we make for ourselves by our own indifference, our want of earnestness, our lack of faith. I am asked to say a few words to parents about the help which they may render in this service, and the responsibility which rests upon them to enlist in this direction the interest and the activity of their young people.

I take for granted the importance of the religious training of the young. I assume the value of the Sunday school and its connexion with the life of the church. In what relation does it stand to those who maintain the life of the home? What sacrifices fall on them to promote its effectiveness and increase its power?

Sunday is often the only day when the hard-worked head of the household can see much of his family. He likes to have sons and daughters round him in the home. He feels a little jealous of work which keeps them perhaps three miles away down in town, on a luncheon of sandwiches and a cup

of tea, and leaves an empty chair or two at the social meal. Or he dislikes the necessity of hurrying home from morning service in order that someone may quit the table when the roast beef has gone round. Yet are not these small things compared with the increase of faith, the growth of righteousness, the culture of love?

The mother, too, has her cares. She is anxious that there should be no overstrain: she is timid about possibilities of infection: she has possibly nameless apprehensions concerning the association of her girls with fellow-teachers of various occupations and positions. She, too, is the watchful guardian of the unity of the home life: she knows that the Sunday hours do not exhaust the claim on the young teacher's time: there is the evening meeting of the preparation class, the occasional afternoon's visiting, perhaps the weekly Guild, or Band of Hope, or happy hour of children's play: and she prepares to resist the invasion of home-joys, as she sees more and more energy diverted from the occupations and engagements of her little circle to be spent on the larger and more needy family beyond. 'These things,' she thinks, 'are for the single and solitary, who have nothing else to do: let them labour, they interfere with no one else.' It is natural; yet must we not plead that the more bountiful gifts do but constitute a richer trust, for out of the fuller life there is more to bestow; abundance of blessing opens the way to the higher call.



There is sometimes another difficulty in the background. It arises out of the secrecy of our religious life, the reticence with which we guard our best thoughts and purposes. Where parents have been wont to read and talk with their children from early years, to cultivate their religious affections with hymn and prayer, to interest them in the services of the church, to guide their maturer thoughts by suggesting books,—there will be less hesitation in encouraging their young people to undertake the duty of religious teaching. The embarrassment which springs from our inarticulateness is, in part at least, overcome beforehand. But sometimes the elders doubt the ability of the younger to undertake a work which involves some amount of thought and speech on the deepest of all themes, because they feel it lies beyond *their* power. They are perhaps vaguely conscious that they have not given their children all the help which they might have done, they have left it to the minister, or to the casual teaching of the public school, and they really know little of what their children think and feel because they have not taken the trouble—or have been too shy—to enquire. Once more, must we not urge that this reserve shall not be allowed to stifle the mounting instincts of the young, or hold back their ardour because our own fires burn low?

If any parents are sceptical as to the value of the Sunday school work considered as a training in character,

an introduction to Christian service, I would say ‘try it.’ Encourage the young teachers to enter into it heartily. Show your sympathy with them by removing what obstacles you can, by making the needful changes in home-arrangements with as little friction as possible, by taking an interest in the details of new duty, and providing what helps may be in your power along the way. And then see if the entry into a new sphere of activity produces indifference to the home. It may for a time be absorbing. New questions arise, new views of life are suggested by contact with ignorance and poverty and sin. The gentle heart is sometimes wrung with distress at sorrow and suffering such as it had not hitherto realised. But does not the enlargement of interest make insight clearer and character stronger? Is the faithful teacher, punctual, earnest, alert, in the school, more or less likely to be also considerate and gracious and self-forgetting at home? Thoughtful of the welfare of the more distant, can he forget what he owes to those around him? The Sunday school offers an admirable training for the wider field of duty which opens before us when we realise the fundamental truth that ‘no man liveth unto himself’; and this training in its turn makes the life of the family richer in harmony of good works and mutual love.

Fathers and mothers, consider these things. The Sunday school calls to you for help, asks you for the inspiring

word of suggestion, for the quickening of impulse at the outset, for and in the maintenance of purposes once formed and plans once adopted. Through this work you are invited to bring your sons and daughters into the service of the Church. You have a share in the responsibility and the labour: may you also have a share in the achievement and the joy!

J. ESTLIN CARPENTER.

SAY not the struggle nought availeth,  
The labour and the wounds are vain,  
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,  
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;  
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,  
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers,  
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,  
Seem here no painful inch to gain,  
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,  
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,  
When daylight comes, comes in the light;  
In front the sun climbs slow—how slowly—  
But westward, look, the land is bright.

A. H. CLOUGH.

'PEOPLE who are much troubled with home worries grow tired of fighting with them all in the same way, however good the way may be, as a man would be sick at heart if he had to fight a giant always with the same weapons; and then they sit down idle and the worries gain the day. But if there are other troubles ready at hand to take their place, why it makes a change, and gives fresh spirit and ease, if it's only by shifting the effort from the right hand to the left.'

E. M. SEWELL.

## Address to Young People.

'It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.'—*Lamentations* iii. 27.

Youth is the morning bright and gay,  
And if 'tis spent in wisdom's way  
We meet old age without dismay,  
And death is sweet at last.



CAN it be true that it is a good thing for us to bear the yoke in our youth? Is it really desirable that girls and boys should work? We have heard it said by wise people that youth should be a bright and happy time, but can it be so to those who have to bear the yoke? Well now, don't let us make a mistake about this. Work is good and play is good for young people, and they can have too little of the first and too much of the second, as well as the reverse state of things. I don't mean that we should go back to the old times when children, instead of going to school, were sent to work in field and factory and pit at the early age of seven. Besides, I believe in allowing young folk plenty of recreation, so that they may grow physically robust and strong; but I find so many youths to-day mad on developing muscle and wind and speed, forgetting that the physical is only one aspect of a great and important necessity. If a man were to spend all his time and attention in developing his right biceps, and so neglected his other muscles as that the rest of his limbs became shrunken and his body wrung out of place, you, who profess to be athletic, would laugh



at him, and consider his development so local as to be in reality a deformity. Yet youths to-day are guilty of an exactly similar thing; for although they can show a muscular protuberance here and there, their almost exclusively physical recreation is ending in mental deformity, skinny shrunken minds, at which wise folk would be equally inclined to laugh were it not that the consequences are so serious.

Now we don't want a man to be lopsided. Manhood means far more than bone and blood and sinew; and far more than football and cricket and rowing; otherwise Fitzsimmons the prize-fighter, Sandow the athlete, and Tom Connors the wrestler, would be the finest men in the world. To the average youth it is pleasanter to play than it is to work, especially to work with the brains. Mental work is tedious and of the nature of drudgery, before we are properly trained to it;—so unlike exercise in the open-air, such as running and bicycling and swimming. Consequently the average youth who works all day in office or shop, thinks it inconsistent for us to expect of him, after working hours, to engage in any exercise that might develop his mind, any thinking that might sharpen his wits, any effort which might confer a moral or intellectual benefit upon his fellows; but he claims it to be his right to indulge in mere sensual bodily pleasure as the highest employment for his spare hours. This is a great mistake, as many of us find out when it is too late

to make complete amends. You know that after a certain age men have to give up playing football and rowing in first-class races; also that if physical exercise is not engaged in from early years it is no use after a certain age attempting to commence it, as no degree of proficiency can then be attained, and probably irretrievable harm may be wrought. It is exactly the same with the mind; neglect its training up to a certain age, and then the opportunity for developing it is lost, and you remain ignorant the rest of your days. After all, is not mind the standard of the man? Do not neglect the needs of the body; see that you become, if possible, shapely in limb and strong in wind; but beware lest in becoming physical giants you also become mental dwarfs.

Now, if half-a-dozen situations were open to an average youth, all offering the same wages, I am afraid he would unhesitatingly choose the one in which the hours were fewest and there was least work to do. All men, young or old, should have ample leisure, and work should by no means be of the nature of slavery; but what are we to think of the youth who during his eight hours' work is thinking of nothing save his amusements in the evening, and with whom he intends promenading up and down the streets; and who, as soon as the clock strikes, seizes his cap and dashes off the premises as if work were a nuisance, a bore, a thing to be despised, and not deserving of even a modicum of



his services and best thought and energy? Perfunctory workers, whose thoughts are wandering on pleasures, are poor workers indeed, and will never do justice to themselves or their employers.

Times have changed; but I imagine boys were boys when our text was written; anyhow its author knew what was good for them when he said 'it is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.' How are the re-pinings and incompetencies of old age to be avoided? What preparation can we make for those days when age stiffens the limbs and we are physically past work, so that our eventide may be full of sweetness and joy and peace? Who wants to be a sour, grumbling, discontented old man, without a hobby to ride, without the ability to take an interest in the vital concerns of life, without a receptive mind and an ever-growing knowledge? Well, if you want this you must make up your minds now, without delay; and live every day as those who are determined to achieve. And there is one thing upon which all the rest hangs; it is self-reverence. In its train there follow self-knowledge, self-control, and all the other virtues and accomplishments without which true and honourable manhood and womanhood are impossible. If you truly reverence yourself you cannot wrong your fellows. If you conduct your own affairs honourably, unselfishly, you must necessarily confer benefit upon others, because you cannot do

justice to yourself unless you do justice to them.

When a young fellow finds himself earning a decent and adequate wage, if he has any self-respect and self-reverence, he remembers the sacrifices his parents have made for him in feeding and clothing and educating him, and his ambition is to not only keep himself thenceforward with his own earnings; but also, if possible, to show the old folk that he appreciates all that has been done for him. So he probably says to his father, 'Look here, now, I am not forgetful of my debt. If by-and-by you get past work and have not been able to make sufficient provision for old age, I will look after you and maintain you.' If there is anything a young man ought to be ashamed of, it is sponging upon the old folk, when he ought to be keeping himself by his own honest toil. An indolent, backboneless, thriftless, selfish youth is about the most despicable object on the face of the earth; and you young folk know that as well as I do.

Now, much as I owe my parents for their careful nurture of me, I also owe a great debt to society. Their opportunities and all my opportunities since have come from this environment we call society. Ought I not to endeavour to pay the debt I owe it? Yet what do the majority of young men and women do for the direct moral and intellectual benefit of society? True self-reverence will compel us to freely and fully liquidate *all* our debts as far as lies in our power.

Again; you may not all think of the value of religious organisation as you might do; but you cannot measure up the influence which church and Sunday school have directly and indirectly upon the formation of your characters. These institutions generate moral oxygen, so to speak; and the air you breathe is impregnated with it; and it is foolishness, not to say ingratitude, to ignore your indebtedness. Yet it is only here and there we come across a young man or young woman who readily recognises this obligation, and is willing to give back to these institutions some effort and thought that may in turn help others. If one of you were in imminent danger, and a comrade saved your life; or if you were in difficulties and he helped you out of them, you might recognise the claim he had upon you when he was in a similar predicament; but although the connection may not be so clear to you, yet society—your church and school—have rendered you far greater service, and in return are constantly asking you to render back your best and truest gifts of time and strength. Don't neglect your healthy pastimes; but don't forget your obligations. If everyone had a full measure of true self-reverence, social strife and imperfection would cease, and mutual helpfulness and moral and intellectual development would characterise human life and conduct.

Alexander was so all-conquering a king that nothing could stay the onrush of his army, and at last he wept

because there were no more lands for him to subdue; but that is all posterity knows of him. Plato, on the contrary, was no warrior, was no great athlete to carry off prizes in the Olympian games; but he was a giant in thought, a mental and moral athlete; and he has left to posterity a legacy of literature which will be treasured as long as time endures. His thought has conquered the world; wherever men have risen out of savagery into intellectual life Plato's philosophy has influenced them; and between his sovereignty and Alexander's there is no comparison,—the conquests of the Macedonian king fade into utter insignificance. The gladiators of old, men developed in muscle and sinew, who could wrestle and fight to the death in the arena, to make sport for Roman holidays, are utterly forgotten; but those who believed in the supremacy of mind, who strove to lift human life to a higher and spiritual level,—their influences have come down to us just as the scent of rose leaves lingers after the vase that contained them is broken. So, too, humanity a hundred years hence will acknowledge its indebtedness most to the *thinkers* of to-day, to the men of brain rather than to the men of brawn who know nothing except what pertains to football and running and cycle championships. Mental power and bodily strength should go together; either without the other is imperfectly equipped; but self-reverence should control them both alike. Remember to cultivate

this virtue while you are young, and then it will assert itself in after years.

Daniel Webster, the great American orator, was asked what thought impressed him most with its awful solemnity, and he replied:—‘The thought of my immediate accountability to God.’ Yes, that is a thought which should startle the sleeper, goad the sluggard, and make the most selfish engage at once whole-heartedly in God’s holy service. Man is the temple of God, the holy of holies. Let him behave as if divinity were indeed in him, prompting and guiding him to humanity’s grandest achievements. To this end ‘It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.’

CHARLES ROPER.

... ‘Good is not a shapeless mass of stone,  
Hewn by man’s hands, and worked by him  
alone;

It is a seed God suffers one to sow,  
Many to reap; and when the harvests grow,  
God giveth increase through all coming  
years,  
And lets us reap, in joy, seed that was sown  
in tears.’

... ‘They serve God well  
Who serve his creatures: when the funeral  
bell

Tolls for the dead, there’s nothing left of all  
That decks the scutcheon and the velvet pall  
Save this. The coronet is empty show:  
The strength and loveliness are hid below:  
The shifting wealth to others hath accrued:  
And learning cheers not the grave’s solitude:  
What’s done is what remains! Ah, blessed  
they

Who leave completed tasks of love to stay  
And answer mutely for them, being dead,  
Life was not purposeless, though life be  
fled.’

HON. MRS. NORTON.

## Recollections of John Pounds.

GATHERED FROM THE ‘REMINISCENCES OF  
JOHN POUNDS,’ BY THE LATE REV. H.  
HAWKES, OF PORTSMOUTH.



FEW days after I came to reside at Portsmouth, in the spring of 1833, a friend said to me, ‘You must go and see the old cobbler—he’s quite a character, and he does a good deal of work in his own quiet, humble way. Everything about him and his manner of living seems very bare and scanty, and would look wretched but for his own happy; contented spirit, and his host of happy little faces: for he has taken a fancy to keeping a school, if school we may call it. He teaches them while he goes on with his cobbling.’

‘What are his terms?’ I asked.

‘Terms!’ she laughed heartily, ‘he has no terms; he won’t receive anything for it. He gets about him the poorest and most destitute; he seeks out those that can’t pay. He has his shop crowded with bird-cages and baskets for his cat and kittens and young birds and other animals—anything he can help to make happy! The place is full of life and cheerfulness. But you must go and see him, and he will tell you all about it himself: for he dearly loves to talk about all his doings to anyone that is interested.’

‘Has he kept this school long?’

‘Yes; many years. But you must not expect to find it much like a school,



It is more of a gathering together of as many children as his shop will hold, with nothing like system or classification. His crowd of little boys and girls cluster about him like a swarm of bees, and with very much of the same sort of constant hum and buzz—all at their ease. They look so happy together; and yet he has some of the roughest of the rough. But he has a way of attaching them to him, so that he can keep them all in good order. They always treat him with the greatest respect. They all love him, and would do anything to please him.'

The next morning we made our way to the old cobbler. We passed through many a dirty, dismal street, and saw several revolting sights of intemperance; women sitting on the doorsteps or lounging about, lazy and gossiping; men, haggard and wretched, smoking as if from desperation; children scattered all about in dirt and rags. And in the midst of this misery and wretchedness, in a little street, crowded on both sides with small houses, the old man worked. 'There's the old man, sitting at his little window, mending an old shoe,' said my friend, pointing to a little weather-boarded house, standing separately by itself between higher houses. 'His little shop is full of scholars. You hear the cheerful buzz of their voices. Quite at their ease, you see. Look at those little things lolling over the half-door, with their heads and arms leaning out, for a little fresh air. And there's a row sitting outside in the street, just

under the old man's open window. And look at his bird-cages hung up outside. How merrily the birds are singing, as if they would outvie one another. The shop is not quite five yards from front to back, and is only about two yards high from floor to ceiling. And in that little place the good cobbler gathers about him some thirty to forty children at a time, and makes them happy and keeps them busy at their lessons! The house has only two rooms, the shop and a chamber over it. You might see the opening of the little twist of a staircase leading up to it in that corner opposite the door but for those children sitting on the steps.'

'I see their heads rising one above the other.'

'They have little else to sit on; only two or three old boxes and a little form or two. Most, you see, are standing, some leaning against the wall, others crowded close together. The upper half-door is almost always open all day long, whatever the weather. On this side of the house you may see the wall is of brick, but only as high as the chamber floor; so on the other side. All the rest is of wood; front, back, and sides mere weather-boarding. One wonders how it can have stood so long, forty or fifty years or more; we don't know how long.'

'The shop looks very dark and dirty. And what a poor little window that is, with its little diamond panes so thickly covered with dust.'

I stood looking at the old man,

through his little open window, at his work, cobbling. A tallish boy was standing beside him reading, while the old man went on mending his old shoe. He looked rough and self-neglected. He had no hat or coat on. His shirt, very dingy, was open at the collar and chest; the sleeves were rolled back above the elbows. His face, neck, chest, arms, and hands—all were dark, as if seldom washed. His voice was harsh and loud as he spoke to the children, but there was something about him which, the more I looked at him and observed his manner of doing things, impressed me with something superior through all. His head was large and manly. His features were strongly marked, and his deeply-furrowed countenance bespoke deep thought and feeling. A large pair of spectacles rested on his broad open forehead. His long arms, though somewhat spare, were muscular and sinewy, implying great strength, and his hands were large and full of vigour.

After gazing for some time on all that was going on, we left the cobbler's shop and went for a walk, enjoying the fine open view over Spithead, with ships lying at anchor and yachts sailing about. Presently I heard the merry sound of children's voices, and looking round I saw some twenty children capering and frolicking about. The first boy that came running along rushed in amongst the furze bushes, and was instantly out of sight. Others came running close after him. 'We's get him such a lot of flowers for this

afternoon,' cried they. Then came running a little girl, all life and activity, with a ringing voice calling out, 'I'se got him some o' they pretty little flowers that looks like a little bird flying-away!' 'And here's one,' said the first boy, coming out from among the furze bushes, 'pinky white; isn't it a little beauty?' showing it to them with delight.

These were some of the happy children whom we had seen with the good old cobbler but an hour or two ago, and, as I watched them gathering flowers to take back to him, I felt that his work of mercy was indeed being 'doubly blessed.'

#### A Lesson with Mr. Pounds.

'Heré, Lizzy,' said the old man, 'come and read a bit for the gentleman.'

And a nice little girl with a clean bright face and neat dress, evidently well taken care of at home, came and climbed upon the cobbler's knee and put her little white arm round his dark rough neck, and he gave her a kiss and she looked very happy. A cat came with her, brushing against his leather apron as if pleased with all that was going on.

'Now Lizzy, here's the sixth chapter of the gospel according to Matthew; it's what our Saviour's saying to the multitude, as he sits on the mountain side.'

And she read the chapter through in a clear, pleasant voice, and with

scarcely a hesitation. All the other children were still and listening as if they were interested in what she was reading.

'That 'ill do, Lizzy,' and he gave her another kiss. 'Now go to puss and the young birds in the corner.'

And she jumped off his knee merrily; and puss went with her to the basket and the young birds in the farther corner.

'What's that you's got in your hand, Polly?'

And a very little girl on the floor beside Lizzy and puss said, 'a buttercup, Mr. Pounds.'

'Buttercup? Bring it to me, Polly, and let's look at it.'

And the little girl brought it to him, and he lifted her up on his knee, and gave her a kiss.

'Spell butter, Polly.'

And the child spelt butter.

'What colour 's butter, Polly?'

'Yellow, Mr. Pounds.'

'Spell yellow.'

And the child, with a little help from the master, spelt yellow.

'And this flower's yellow like butter. Now spell cup.'

'Kup.'

'No, Polly;—cup. They doesn't know, Sir, how C spells like K,' said the old man apologetically to me. 'Now mind that, Polly; c-u-p, cup. And now look down into the flower; it looks like a cup; doesn't it Polly?'

'Yes, Mr. Pounds.'

'And so they calls it a butter-cup. Where's you get it, Polly?'

'On the walls; and there's daisies, too.'

'Buttercups and daisies! Who makes the buttercups and daisies, Polly?'

'God; Mr. Pounds.'

'And God takes care of 'em in the dark night, and when the storm blows hard. And when the storm's over and gone, and the sun shines out bright again, there's the pretty buttercups and daisies again all so bright and pleasant for us to look upon. Isn't it very kind of God, to make so many nice things for us?'

'Yes; Mr. Pounds.'

'Red roses and white roses that grows in the hedges and smell so sweet; and cowslips and primroses; and the pretty birds singing all day long so merrily to, make us glad. There's no end to all the good things that God's always doing for us. And we'se love Him, Polly.'

'Yes, mother says so.'

'And we'se try to do what 'll please Him, Polly.'

And the old man gave her a kiss.

'There, go to Lizzy, and puss, and the little birds in the basket.'

### An Autumn Lesson.

'What month's this?—to all the school.

'October.'

'Yes, now's October come in. Now Autumn's come. Spring for flowers; and autumn for fruits. What fruit's ripe now?'

'Blackberries, Nuts, Acorns.'



'That 'ill do lads ; there's lots more. I s'pose you sometimes pricks your fingers when you's a gettin' blackberries.'

'Yes, Mr. Pounds!' several voices answer, with a laugh.

'What's blackberries fruit of?'

'Brambles.'

'Where's you mostly find brambles agrowing?'

'Along hedge-rows and among wild bushes.'

'Does mother make pies and puddings o' blackberries?'

'Yes, they's so good! And we goes and gets baskets full and sells 'em.'

'That's right, lads. 'Arn an honest penny, when's y' can, and help y' father and mother keep y''

'Yes, Mr. Pounds!' cry many voices heartily.

'What trees bears Acorns?'

'Oak trees, Mr. Pounds.'

'The Oak of Old England! Our ships ben built of oak. An' our brave sailors likes to sing "Hearts of Oak!" What's they mean, Jem, when they says, "Hearts of Oak"?''

'Strong for duty.'

'Right lad. They calls our ships the wooden walls of Old England. What's they mean by that, Jem?'

''Cause they keeps us safe from the enemies outside.'

'Right lad; with our brave sailors aboard. But if all's be good friends and neighbourly like; that's be best for all. All's be safe then, an' good friends, and no fighting. But they's a long time coming to this.'

## How John Pounds takes his Children for a Ramble.

*(As told by a Neighbour.)*

'Johnny,—that's Mr. Pounds, you know,'—said Mr. Lemon, 'made up his mind to take his "vagabonds," as he calls them, for their excursion to-day, so he packed up the provisions last evening, and made all ready. This morning he was up and stirring by five o'clock, getting a good breakfast for the children. A couple of lads were sent round to the scholars (except to the very little ones who could not walk so far) to tell them to come to breakfast at six o'clock, for they were to start at seven. The boys and girls soon came trooping in; and punctual to time, breakfast was ready. The old cobbler helped them all bountifully.

"Are ye all served?" he asked.

"Yes; Mr. Pounds."

'Then he gently raised his hand, and all were still.

"Bless the Lord for his goodness!" he said reverently.

'Then they began their breakfast; all setting to work in right good earnest. The provisions they were to take with them for the day, the cobbler had packed up in several bags. These bags, when he first began these excursions for the children, had a long string fastened to them, so that the boys might sling them over their shoulders and have their arms and hands at liberty. But he soon improved upon this; and instead of a string he fitted a leather strap to each

bag with a buckle at one end, and long enough for the boys to adapt it comfortably to their shoulders. One bag is always much larger than the others; this he carries himself. And very often in such rambles when any of the younger ones begin to get tired and can't well keep up with the rest, he takes them upon his back, first one and then another and carries them miles together. One wonders how he can do it, so lame as he is too! He has always been crippled, you know, ever since he fell into the dry dock as a lad. And as they go rambling about, quite at their ease, he's on the look-out in all directions, and shows them all sorts of things; anything that he thinks will interest them; and stops and explains things in his pleasant way, at any moment, whenever any one comes running to him with anything to show him, or ask him any questions; or he turns aside with them, whenever they want him to go and look at anything they can't bring to him. Whatever interests them interests him. His kindness and patience among those poor children seem inexhaustible. Nothing seems to weary him, while he is doing all he can for them. And his strong hazel stick has a hook at the end; and with this he pulls down branches of trees, and shows them anything upon them; flowers or fruits, oak-apples or caterpillars; and sometimes other plants growing upon them. And when they come to water, and there are water-lilies or other plants growing—floating on the surface, or

growing deep down in the water—he draws them to him with his hooked stick and shows them to the children. The other end of his stick has a lump of iron fixed to it, narrowed like a wedge. With this he digs up roots for them; and they bring them home; and he give them flower-pots or makes them wooden boxes to grow them in. Nothing's a trouble to him that will give them pleasure and help to store their hearts and minds with happy thoughts and good feelings.

October is a favourite month with Johnny. He likes to go over the hill in October to enjoy the rich autumnal tints in the trees.

'In the evening, as they return from these long rambles, they come loaded with flowers and ferns and other interesting things that they have gathered. And then when they get back they are ready for something! Johnny brings them all with him into his little shop; where there's a substantial tea ready for them! plenty of good thick bread and butter—all ready cut. And the tea's ready made, and the kettle's boiling, ready to make more. That's one of his kettles there; that big one beside the fire; which he brought to us to have it boiling by the time they come back. And my daughter here will go and have every thing nice and ready for them. And we're as happy at home—helping to have everything nice and ready for them when they return, as they are to come and enjoy it. And dear old Johnny's the happiest among

them! No signs of weariness with him till they're all well fed and refreshed; and gone to their homes. And then he sits down in his arm-chair and goes to sleep!

Such are a few glimpses into the life of John Pounds, called to-day the founder of Ragged Schools, though he himself never realised what a grand seed-sowing he had begun. His memory is still fondly cherished in Portsmouth where his old dwelling has been rebuilt and still serves as a centre of helpfulness.

### WATCH YOUR WORDS.

KEEP a watch on your words, my darlings,

For words are wonderful things;

They are sweet like bees' fresh honey—

Like the bees they have terrible stings;

They can bless like the warm glad sunshine,

And brighten a lonely life;

They can cut in the strife of anger,

Like an open, two-edged knife.

Let them pass through your lips unchallenged,

If their errand is true and kind—

If they come to support the weary,

To comfort and help the blind:

If a bitter revengeful spirit

Prompt the words, let them be unsaid;

They may flash through a brain like lightning

Or fall on a heart like lead.

Keep them back if they're cold and cruel,

Under bar, and lock, and seal;

The wounds they make, my darlings,

Are always slow to heal.

May peace guard your lives, and ever,

From the time of your early youth,

May the words that you daily utter

Be the words of beautiful truth.

—Selected.

## The Love of Literature: what is it?



AS to literature, I admit frankly that much of the love of literature, the professed love of literature, is in our day too much of an affectation. It is very often not much more than gossip and chatter about authors and books, and not a sincere and living interest in the thoughts, the feelings, the moods, the ideas, which it is the business of books to build up into our minds and characters. After all the real thing is that reading and books should be fruitful in strengthening the great foundations of character.

I am not going to enter into competition with Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Bacon, and the other saints and sages of the world, but I suppose the foundations of character are a love of justice, of truth, and of mercy—these three; and when I say mercy, I venture to include what Tennyson calls 'Pity for the horse o'erdriven, and love in which my hound has part.'

It matters almost less what books you read, what subjects you handle, what topics you treat of, than the spirit in which they are dealt with. And do not forget, I am sure you cannot forget, that one of the most important things of all is personal influence; the eye, the look, the voice, often contain in themselves a lesson, and books and lectures ought to be made alive by this personal influence. JOHN MORLEY.

# Teachers in Council

## The Sunday School Library.

### I.



SUPPOSE that we are all agreed that a school library is an essential part of every Sunday and day school, and I therefore offer in this letter a few notes of my own experience in managing a library, as the result of many years' work, hoping thereby to elicit the experience of others.

The first requisite is a librarian who is ready to give a good deal of time to the work, and who will make himself acquainted more or less with all the books in the library, not necessarily by reading through the whole of them, but by looking into them and knowing their contents, or by getting some one else to help him to do so, whose judgment he can trust. It is very necessary to have this 'censorship of the press.' The knowledge so gained is also quite invaluable, as enabling the librarian to suit the books to the special readers, to find what is asked for by the children, and to recommend books to doubtful or over-particular readers. I have very often been troubled by some most fastidious or

spoilt child who would not be satisfied; but if I could give a short and stirring account of something in a book that I thought would do, or open it at once at some telling picture, he would listen, and brighten up, and say, 'I'll take that'; while some one standing near would often say, 'Let me have that book next week.' By a thorough knowledge of the contents of the library, the librarian is also armed against the children who declare that they have 'read all the books,' which may number over a thousand.

I would suggest that no librarian should accept a present of books without free leave to select such as he wants and return the rest to the donor. It is impossible to accept some that are offered.

One chief reason why a librarian should be able to give time to the work is that the books get much torn, and ought to be mended; and the covers become torn and very dirty, and need replacing. This is not pleasant work, and yet even this has a charm of its own, as it is surprising how well a book in very bad condition may turn out when well mended, and how long it will stave off the purchase of a new copy, or the services of the



binder, and save money to buy a new book to add to the collection. Some people advocate having the books without covers, because the backs are gay and pretty, and this is very tempting, but it is a temptation which I should advise a librarian to resist, especially in a town. The state of dirt to which the brown paper covers get reduced shows what would be the state of the pretty backs. I think strong, tough brown paper is the best thing for covers, as I find that the cover just about lasts till it is thoroughly dirty, and it is far more wholesome to change the covers when necessity thus compels, than to make them of any more lasting material which carries the dirt about for a longer time and into more homes. The clean covers are very much appreciated and admired.

A librarian will find the economy of cupboard space much the greatest if the books are arranged according to *sizes*, and not according to subjects. An alphabetical catalogue will provide for the subject arrangement, or there can be a subject catalogue as well, for reference. For this arrangement by size it is a good plan to leave blanks at intervals throughout the shelves, of perhaps six or eight numbers, and to place new books, when they come, according as they fit the shelves. When there are annuals and magazines this plan becomes specially necessary.

As to catalogues, where there is not a printed catalogue (which is a difficulty with an increasing library), it is a good plan to get two or three copies

of the catalogue written out, and to lend them to the readers on application, to take home, entering the loan in the register, opposite the reader's name, and taking care to get the catalogue returned. The children enjoy taking one home, and invariably return the next week with a long list of numbers written out, from which to select, and thereby save a great deal of time and trouble in finding what they want. It is a good plan to have the whole catalogue written out or printed, alphabetically, in good large type, and pasted on to boards, which can be hung up in the room for the children's use during the giving out of the books, and shut up inside the cupboards till wanted again.

I am afraid that in these days it will be very unpopular to suggest that the readers should pay for the books: but I am strongly of opinion that a small payment is most desirable. It deters very few who really care about the books, and it inclines all to be more careful, and makes them understand that there is some expense connected with the library, and gives them a feeling of self-respect and importance. It involves a small amount of trouble, as all are not equally punctual in paying, but if the pennies are understood to be due at the *beginning* of each month, and are looked up before the end of it, very few debts or losses can arise. The addresses of all the readers should be taken down and kept in the register. The fees are also most valuable to the library, as my

experience is that they about suffice to pay for binding and replacing, and brown paper and labels; so that any other moneys which can be collected as subscriptions or donations can be used entirely for buying new books. Every library, if it is to be a success, must have an increase of books every year. If this flags for want of funds, the readers soon begin to drop off.

When a school has secured a good librarian, he should be kept as long as possible without change, as he gains a knowledge of the children as well as of the books, which is not only a great source of pleasure and advantage to himself, but also to them, as he can then easily keep in order a long and impatient *queue* of young readers, ardent for their turn, as well as advising them what books to take. I have found it a good plan to have one line of girls and one of boys, side by side, and to take a girl and a boy alternately; and as each one when served turns away, the whole column moves on one step, till the whole number has been served.

GERTRUDE MARTINEAU.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Some of our readers will be glad to know that a list of books suitable for Libraries and for Rewards has been compiled by the Sunday School Association, and may be had on application to Mr. Hare, Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, W.C.; and that another has been brought out by the Manchester District Sunday School Association, and this may be obtained from Rev. J. Moore, Hindley Parsonage, near Wigan.

## II.

Miss Martineau, in the foregoing letter, treats very practically, out of her own long experience, of the management of the School Library. Years ago, when I was a young librarian in a Sunday school, I should have been most grateful for the valuable hints which Miss Martineau gives, but, in the absence of such hints, I was left to work out my own experience. And I am pleased to say that that experience leads me to endorse in every particular the advice which Miss Martineau's letter contains.

In more recent years, and in different Sunday schools, I have had to do with the library in the initial stages. If I relate a little of the experience I have had in the formation of the library I may drop more useful hints to teachers in council than if I discussed the question of the value of the library in Sunday school work, or any other aspect of the subject.

Doubtless, there are very few Sunday schools throughout the country that are without that most important help in the mental training and soul growth of their scholars—the Library. All the larger schools, of course, have their library. Many of the smaller schools have theirs. A few, however, are still without. The teachers have sometimes felt the need of one; the scholars have often wished they had one, but from some cause or other the attempt has never been made to supply the deficiency. The task of forming a

library may have seemed too great. It may have seemed to demand too much time from already hardly pressed teachers, or too much money from over-taxed resources. But I would assure all timid teachers that the difficulties are only in appearance. When once a beginning has been made the difficulties vanish. We can no more afford to despise the day of small things in the formation of the school library than we can afford to despise it in any other branch of Sunday school work. Because a library of five hundred volumes cannot be at once formed is no reason why a beginning should not be made with ten. Given a teacher who has a love for books, and a love for children, who is also endowed with a spirit of persistent perseverance in the way of well-doing, and a Sunday school library once *begun*—however small the beginning—will grow under him.

A library with which I am acquainted, which now contains upwards of six hundred volumes, began some years ago with a dozen books. These had been either given by friends, or bought in second-hand book shops. They were lent out week by week to the teachers and scholars at a charge of one penny per volume,—a price which was willingly paid when it was known that a library was, by that means, in process of formation. In a few weeks sufficient money was in hand to add another dozen books to the very select, but already well-read collection. For several months

this method of raising money and of adding to the number went on. With the growth of the library the interest of the whole school also grew. A successful entertainment was provided by the teachers and scholars on behalf of its fund. The librarian himself never neglected an opportunity of pleading its cause. He even wrote a letter to a weekly paper appealing for suitable books. He knew that in many homes there were children's books which had been read and re-read, and which, now that the owners were no longer children, were rarely or never looked at. He thought he had only need to mention that such books would be most thankfully received on behalf of the scholars' library which was being formed in the Sunday school, to have them poured in upon him. His enthusiasm, however, was doomed to disappointment: for only a few books came in response to the appeal, and even those were not of the class which he had hoped for. Fortunately, a free hand was allowed him by the donors to otherwise dispose of such books as were not deemed suitable for the library. The majority of them did not come up to the standard, for it had been wisely determined at the very beginning to admit only the useful and readable books—books containing a healthy moral sentiment—and books which appealed to the imagination and heart of childhood.

In the course of two years, however, upwards of two hundred books were got together, and every one of



them could be read with pleasure and profit by the scholars.

Now came the task—not a light one—of permanently arranging the books in a library cupboard. The work was made pleasant by reason of the number of teachers and scholars who gathered, after the day's work was over, to give a helping hand. For the sake of neatness in appearance, as well as to economise space, the books were arranged according to size: for the sake of uniformity as well as cleanliness they were covered in a dark brown glazed paper: for the sake of easy reference they were numbered and catalogued. Two catalogues were made—one following the arrangement on the shelves, giving the books according to their consecutive numbers, the other recording the titles in alphabetical order. To prevent the books from wandering too far away, and getting lost, through the neglect of careless borrowers, each book was stamped in three or four places with an indiarubber marking stamp made specially for the purpose.

A gummed label—three inches by four—containing the rules, was affixed to the inside of the cover of each book. Some rules are necessary but, that they may be well remembered, they should be as few and as simple as possible. I give the label which we used, and leave the rules and other matter to speak for themselves. All I need say is that after years of usage the rules have been found to meet all the requirements. Of course,

local circumstances may necessitate modification of some of them.

## B..... CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOL LIBRARY.

Fourteen days allowed for reading.

'Read, mark,<sup>1</sup> learn and inwardly digest.'

No.....

### RULES.

1.—The Library shall be open to Members of the Church, and Teachers and Scholars of the School on payment of One Penny per month.

2.—Attendance shall be given at the close of Afternoon School for receipt and delivery of Books.

3.—All Books may be renewed; and a fine of one half-penny per week shall be paid by members who keep Books beyond the time allowed and neglect to renew them.

4.—All damaged and lost Books shall be replaced at the cost of the borrower.

PLEASE KEEP THIS BOOK CLEAN.

It should never be forgotten that a library when once formed requires constant attention. Books need frequent repair,—a leaf pasting in,—a section re-sewing,—a back re-fixing,—a cover replacing. Vigilance should be the watchword of the librarian. It is surprising how much can be done to keep the library tidy, and the books in good condition, when a little time is regularly devoted to them each week

<sup>1</sup> Young readers would need to have this motto explained, or books might come to be 'marked' in more literal fashion! The suggestion of glazed brown paper is excellent, being so much more cleanly than the rough make. Black linen is also good, for though dearer at first, it wears better.—Ep.

by an ever-watchful and industrious librarian. But in spite of the most vigilant care books get worn out, and no amount of pasting and stitching will make them look decent. It is better to replace these by new copies than to let them disfigure the shelves, and bring discredit on the library every time they are lent out. New books are always being published, and in replenishing the library, which should be done at frequent intervals, it is best to introduce some of the newest books. The interest of the members is thereby kept fresh and living.

AN OLD LIBRARIAN.

### THE TAPESTRY WEAVERS.

LET us take to our hearts a lesson—  
 No lesson can braver be—  
 From the ways of the Tapestry Weavers  
 On the other side of the sea.  
 Over their head the pattern hangs,  
 They study it with care,  
 The while their fingers deftly work  
 Their eyes are fastened there.

They tell this curious thing beside  
 Of the patient, plodding Weaver,  
 He works on the wrong side day by day,  
 But works for the right side ever.

It is only when the weaving stops,  
 And the web is loosed and turned,  
 That he sees his real handiwork,  
 And his wondrous skill is learned.

Ah! the sight of its delicate beauty,  
 How it pays him for all his cost,  
 No rarer, daintier, work than his  
 Was ever done by the frost.

Then the Master giveth him golden hire,  
 And giveth him praise as well;  
 And how happy the heart of the weaver is  
 No tongue but his own can tell.

The Years of Man are the Looms of God  
 Let down from the place of the Sun,  
 Wherein we are weaving every day  
 Till the mystic web is done.

Weaving blindly, but weaving still,  
 Each for himself his fate,  
 We may not see how the right side looks,  
 We can only weave and wait.

But looking above for the pattern,  
 No weaver has need to fear,  
 Only let him look straight into Heaven,  
 The Perfect Pattern is there.

If he keep the face of the Christhood  
 For ever and always in sight,  
 His toil shall be sweeter than honey,  
 His weaving is sure to be right.

And when his task is completed,  
 And the web is reversed and shown,  
 He shall hear a voice of approval,  
 Exclaiming, 'Well done, well done.'

While the Spirit that keepeth the record  
 Shall tell of his patient renown,  
 And the Master shall give to him gold  
 for his hire,  
 Not coin, but a Crown!

*Selected.*

'God has a purpose for each one of us, and it should be the great aim of our lives to find out what that purpose is, and then in right earnest, set ourselves to the realizing of it.

'We are often told that it is a serious thing to die; it would be well if we remembered that it is a far more serious thing to live.'

Author of *St. Olaves*.



## A Year of Sunday Lessons.

**T**HE following series is intended to supply a kind of Treasure Store of suggestive lessons. For those parents and teachers who wish to have some sequence in their lessons throughout the whole year, the opportunity is here afforded them of following out a course with system and method; but at the same time, the divisions are so arranged that a course of four to twelve lessons may be easily selected, or even a single one separated from the rest.

The series is based on the two great commandments,

LOVE TO GOD AND LOVE TO MAN,  
and is divided into the following sections:—

1. (Three months.) GOD.  
He is mighty, obey Him.  
He is wise, trust Him.  
He loves us; love Him.
2. (Three months.) MAN.  
Be strong.  
Be wise.  
Be loving.

3. (One month.) OUR DUTY TO OURSELVES.

4. (Four months.) OUR DUTIES TO OTHERS.

To our homes.  
To our neighbour.  
To our country.  
To mankind.

5. (One month.) EXAMPLES.

Helping our family.  
Helping our neighbours.  
Helping our country.  
Helping mankind.

The selections for reading aloud by the teacher are given in full. As a rule they are taken from the Bible, but whenever a passage is chosen from elsewhere, a motto or text from the Bible is added, so that the children may have occasion to use it every Sunday, if desired.

It will be noted that the selections do not invariably follow the Authorised, the Revised, or any other single translation. In each case I have gone through the passage, comparing some three or four translations, and have selected words from one or another, according as there was a consensus of opinion in favour of some special rendering, or where one version seemed to me to have caught the meaning better than the rest. The notes of the *Variorum Teachers' Bible* have been most helpful to me in my work, as well as the translations of Charles Wellbeloved, Samuel Sharpe, and others. Professor Moulton's edition of *The Modern Reader's Bible* has also been very useful.

One word more. Nathaniel Haw-



thorne says, 'Nobody, I think, ought to read poetry, or look at pictures or statues, who cannot find a great deal more in them than the poet or artist has actually expressed. Their highest merit is suggestiveness.'

May this be the spirit in which the following selections and lessons are used, and may the suggestiveness be ever towards the higher and not the lower ideal.

## THE TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS,

### Love to God and Love to Man.

#### FIRST WORDS.

HAVING decided upon the section or sections to be taken, the teacher should glance through that portion so as to catch the spirit of the lessons as a whole.

I would suggest some such method as the following for the carrying of them out; and may I ask the indulgence of my readers, at the outset, for having used the masculine pronoun only, when referring to the teacher; and to beg them to understand that whenever 'he' and 'his' are found in this connection, that the words 'she,' or 'her,' are to be understood.

The teacher should devote a quiet half-hour, at least, to the preparation of the lesson, besides thinking about it at odd moments during the week:

1. To look up the passage in order to see its context.

2. To read it through (aloud, if possible), so that he may give it with intelligence and some dramatic power.

3. To go over the notes and select which ones he desires to use, and to consider how best to illustrate and emphasize the lesson.

Before reading the selection a few words to the scholars are necessary, so that they may understand the 'setting,'—the circumstances which led to the song, or story, or incident.

After the passage has been read by the teacher, and *not before*, the scholars should find its place in the Bible and read it round, paragraph by paragraph, the teacher explaining and illustrating the meaning as occasion arises. When the whole selection has been thus carefully gone through, it may be well for the books to be shut and for the teacher to read it once again to the class; for the meaning, having been made clearer, will now be better appreciated by the scholars.

After the lesson there should be some close questioning upon it; it is well for the teacher to write the main questions in a note book, and these ought to be re-taken on the following Sunday before a fresh lesson is begun. At the end of each month there should be a repetition of the section, and again at the close of each separate division of the course.

It will increase the general interest if every scholar has a note book, in which to write (at teacher's dictation) the date, subject of lesson, and either some motto, or verse, bearing upon it. It must be remembered, however, that it is impracticable to write more than a few lines, for time will not allow.

## JANUARY.

'We needs must love the highest when we see it.'—*Tennyson*.

## FIRST SUNDAY. INTRODUCTION.

READING. *Mark* xii. 28-34.

SETTING.—Jesus has been asked several questions, first by one learned party among the Jews, and then by another; they have tried to confuse him, but in vain. A scribe, learned in the law, who has been looking on and evidently admiring the way in which the questions have been answered, comes forward in his turn.

And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that Jesus had answered them well, asked him,

'Which is the first commandment of all?'

And Jesus answered him, 'The first commandment of all is **Hear O Israel; the Lord is our God; the Lord is one. And thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.**'

'And the second is this, **Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.** There is none other commandment greater than these.'

And the scribe said unto him, 'Of a truth, master, thou has well said that he is one, and there is none other but he; and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbour as oneself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.'

And when Jesus saw that he had answered him discreetly, he said unto

him, 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of heaven.'

NOTES.—Ver. 28, '*First*,' meaning, probably, first in importance. Ver. 30, the last clause in Authorised Version, is omitted in the later translations.

Verses 29, 32. Note the greater distinctness in later versions; *the Lord is one*.

Ver. 30. Taken, not from the ten commandments (*Deut.* v. 6-21), but from *Deut.* vi. 4-9, which read.—This passage, called by the Jews 'the great confession'—*Shema*—is held by them to be one of the four most sacred portions of their Scriptures. They write these on narrow strips of parchment and enclose them in little cube-shaped leathern boxes, attached to a strap, so that they may bind them about their forehead, and on their left arm—near the heart—at prayer time. These are called phylacteries. They also put these words, written on parchment, into cases, and fasten them to the door-posts, according to the command given in *Deut.* vi. 6-9.

By quoting this passage Jesus showed that he acknowledged the binding force of these ancient words; and from his answer the learned scribe saw that the Master could see beneath the *letter*, into the *spirit* of the commandments. For the whole ten were embraced in these two. 'Excellent well' (according to one translation) exclaims the questioner, when the Master had finished; and the Master appreciated in his turn, the words of the other.

Now it is these two commandments which we are to take as our subject for the year. We shall begin with *Love to God*. We must even begin before that. For we must learn, as O. W. Holmes says,

'To know Him first, then trust Him, and then love.'

Real Love can only be truly said to come when *fear* of Him has been overcome. 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.' 'Perfect love casteth out all fear.'

In the early childhood of the world, when men first began to understand that there was some Power greater than their own, before whom the strongest man must give way, it was Might and Strength which they symbolised and worshipped.

Gradually, as time went on, one here and there who was wiser than the rest, came to see how marvellous were the works of land and sky; and he added to his worship of Holder of Power, the worship of the Wise Ruler; and by degrees the higher thoughts of single thinkers spread—more or less—among the nations.

Then came the deeper insight, that spite of seeming ill, the Maker and Ruler was not only powerful and wise, but also full of love; first, indeed, men thought of Him as loving only one special nation, but afterwards they came to recognise that He is the loving Father of the whole human race.

It is of these things that we are to speak during the coming year, so that we may learn something of what such an acknowledgment requires of us.

N.B.—In the Biblical selections which follow, we have tried to show this gradual development of a higher ideal,—hence the passages chosen are not of the same ethical value. The old belief that the whole contents of the Bible, 'from cover to cover,' was equally inspired, is rapidly passing;

and it is good that we learn to realise this, as it will enable us to appreciate to a far greater extent wherein lies the true worth of the Bible itself. The teacher should read *The Bible and its Meaning*, p. 190.

## SECOND SUNDAY.

### God is mighty, obey Him.

READING. *Ex.* xv. 1-11.

SETTING.—Refer to the bondage of the Hebrews in the land of Egypt, and of their escape under the leadership of Moses. This is the song of thankfulness to their God, Jahveh,<sup>1</sup> for having led them victoriously out of all their dangers.

Then sang Moses and the children of Israel, this song to Jahveh, and spake, saying,

I will sing unto Jahveh, for he hath triumphed gloriously:  
The horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

Jahveh is my strength and my song,  
And he is become my salvation:  
He is my God, and I will glorify him;  
My father's God, and I will exalt him.

Jahveh is mighty in war.

Jahveh is his name.

The chariots of Pharaoh and his host he hath cast into the sea:

His chosen captains are drowned in the Red Sea.

The depths have covered them: they went down to the bottom like a stone.

Thy right hand, O Jahveh, hath been glorious in power:

<sup>1</sup> The *J* is to be pronounced as *Y*. See note on JHVH, p. 213.



Thy right hand, O Jahveh, hath dashed  
in pieces the enemy.

In the greatness of thine excellency  
thou hast overthrown them who  
rose up against thee :

Thou sentest forth thy wrath, it con-  
sumed them like stubble.

By the blast of thy nostrils the waters  
were piled up ;

The floods stood upright as a heap ;  
The depths were congealed in the midst  
of the sea.

The enemy said, ' I will pursue, I will  
overtake, I will divide the spoil ;  
' My desire shall be satisfied upon them ;  
' I will draw my sword, my hand shall  
destroy them.'

Thou didst blow with thy breath, the  
sea covered them ;

They sank like lead in the mighty waters.

Who, among the gods, is like thee,  
O Jahveh ?

Who is like thee in glory and in  
holiness ; so terrible in power,  
and so worthy to be praised for  
thy wonderful works ?

Thou stretchest out thy right hand,  
The earth swallowed them.

Thou hast led forth in thy mercy the  
people whom thou hast redeemed :

Thou art guiding them in thy strength  
to thy holy habitation.

Peoples shall hear, and tremble :

Pangs shall lay hold on the inhabitants  
of Philistia : and the Princes of  
Edom shall be amazed.

Trembling shall seize the mighty men  
of Moab : all the inhabitants of  
Canaan shall melt away.

Fear and dread shall fall upon them :

Through the greatness of thine arm  
they shall be still as a stone ;

Till thy people pass over, O Jahveh,

Till the people pass over whom thou  
hast purchased.

Thou wilt bring them in, and plant  
them in the mountain of thine  
inheritance,

In the place, O Jahveh, which thou  
hast made for thyself to dwell in,

The sanctuary, O Jahveh, which thine  
hands have established.

The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.

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NOTES.—Compare verses 2, 3, 11, with  
the ordinary Bibles, henceforth referred to  
as A. V. Also see article on *Some difficulties  
in the way of understanding the Hebrew  
Scriptures*, p. 212 ; especially passage on  
the word Jahveh ; and on the tenses.

Might, Strength,—these were the chief  
essentials in the ancient conception of a  
Divine Ruler, and we can understand the  
enthusiasm that made the people sing for  
joy at their deliverance. The Egyptians  
worshipped many gods, the Hebrews had  
but one. And yet theirs had proved him-  
self the conqueror, he had led them forth  
in safety. Verily, he must be the Mighty  
one ! What force such a recollection as  
this must give to the words quoted last  
week from *Deut.* vi. 4, 'Hear, O Israel, the  
Lord is our God, the Lord is one.'

In early days men knew little of the  
wonderful laws by which the Heavenly  
Father governs the universe ; so they  
thought that every good thing was given  
by a special controlling of events on their  
behalf. We, who know more, should  
surely love Him more !

## THIRD SUNDAY.

READING. *Lev. xxvi. 1-21.*

SETTING.—The reading last Sunday showed how the might of Jahveh, and his favour to the people of Israel had been acknowledged by them. Now Moses puts before them the obligation of obedience to this Mighty One; and, speaking in the name of Jahveh, promises either a continuance of his favour, or a dire punishment, according as to whether the people keep his commandments or disobey them.

Ye shall not make for yourselves idols nor a graven image, nor shall ye raise up for yourselves a statue, nor shall ye place in your land a figured stone, to bow down unto it: for I am Jahveh your God. Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am Jahveh.

If ye walk in my statutes, and observe my commandments, and do them; then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield its increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. And your threshing shall reach to the vintage, and the vintage shall reach to the seed time; and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land securely. And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid; and I will drive away wild beasts out of the land, and the sword shall not pass through your land. And ye shall pursue your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword. And five of you shall pursue a hundred, and a hundred of you shall pursue ten thousand: and your enemies

shall fall before you by the sword. For I will be favourable to you and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you. And ye shall eat old store, and bring forth the old to make room for the new. And I will set my tabernacle amongst you: and my soul shall not abhor you; but I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people. I am Jahveh your God, who brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you to walk upright.

But if ye will not hearken to me, and will not do all these commandments; and if ye despise my statutes, and if ye abhor my judgments, so as not to do all my commandments, but to break my covenant, I also will do this to you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and fever which shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart; and in vain shall ye sow your seed, for your enemies shall eat it. And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they who hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when no one pursueth you. And if for all this ye will not yet hearken to me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins, and I will break the pride of your stubbornness; and I will make your heavens as iron, and your earth as brass. And your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield its in-

crease, nor shall the trees of the field yield their fruits.'

NOTES.—There are no essential alterations in the text here, only the replacing of a word or two here and there when the later translations seemed to me better. Ver. 19, Heavens as 'iron,' earth as 'brass'; therefore no refreshing rain can break through the heavens, and no spade can dig down into the earth.

'When the strong command  
Obedience is best.'

This was the main feeling that existed in the earlier time, when the ancient people had as yet only attained the first step up the mountain which leads to the Heavenly Father. It was very good as far as it went; and in many ways reminds us of the state of England when the feudal laws were in force. A man living in those troublous times could not withstand the marauders and robbers by himself, so he became a vassal to the chief of that part of the country to whom he took the vow of obedience, and in exchange received the protection of his lord. This compact sounds much the same, except that it is made between Jahveh and his people.

#### FOURTH SUNDAY.

READING. *Joshua* xxiv. 1-24.

SETTING.—Since the events told in the last reading the Israelites have made their way from the desert to the land of Canaan. Moses is dead, and Joshua has succeeded him as leader. Now that the enemies are vanquished and the Israelites have gained a foothold in the land where, according to their traditions, their fathers had sojourned before going to Egypt, Joshua calls his people together and asks them which God they will choose to worship; let them make up their minds once for all, only let them understand that whomsoever they choose, him they must obey.

And Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel, and for their chiefs, and for their judges, and for their officers; and they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, Thus saith Jahveh, God of Israel, 'Your fathers dwelt of old time on the other side of the River (Euphrates), even Terah the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor; and they served other gods. But I took your father Abraham from the other side of the River and led him through all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed and gave him Isaac. And I gave to Isaac, Jacob and Esau.

And I gave to Esau Mount Seir, that he might possess it; but Jacob and his sons went down into Egypt.

I sent Moses also and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt, according to that which I did in the midst of it: and afterwards I brought you out. I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and ye came unto the sea; and the Egyptians pursued after your fathers with chariots and horsemen unto the Red Sea. And when they cried to Jahveh, he put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them, and covered them; your eyes have seen what I did in Egypt.

And ye dwelt in the desert a long season.

And I brought you into the land of the Amorites, who dwelt on the other side of the Jordan; and they fought with you; and I gave them into your



hand, that ye might possess their land; and I destroyed them from before you. Then Balak the son of Zippor, King of Moab, arose and warred against Israel, and sent and called Balaam the son of Beor to curse you, but I would not hearken unto Balaam; therefore he blessed you still: so I delivered you out of his hand.

And ye went over the Jordan, and came to Jericho; and the men of Jericho fought against you, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Girgashites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I delivered them into your hand. I sent the hornet before you, which drove them out from before you, even the two kings of the Amorites; but not with thy sword, or with thy bow.

And I gave you a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not, do ye eat.'

Now therefore fear Jahveh, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt; and serve ye Jahveh. And if it seem evil to you to serve Jahveh, choose you this day whom you will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve Jahveh.'

And the people answered and said,

'Far be it from us that we should forsake Jahveh to serve other gods; for Jahveh our God, he it is who brought us up, and our fathers, out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and who did these great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed: and Jahveh drove out from before us all the peoples, even the Amorites who dwelt in the land: Jahveh we will serve! for he is our God.'

And Joshua said to the people, 'Ye cannot serve Jahveh, for he is a holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. When ye forsake Jahveh and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you after that he hath done you good.'

And the people said unto Joshua, 'Nay, Jahveh we will serve.'

Then Joshua said to the people, 'Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you Jahveh, to serve him.'

And they said, 'We are witnesses.'

'Now therefore put away,' said he, 'the strange gods which are among you, and incline your heart to Yahveh, God of Israel.'

And the people said to Joshua, 'Jahveh our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.'

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NOTES.—Ver. 1. — '*Presented themselves before God.*' These words show how vividly they recognised Jahveh's power behind their leader. Ver. 3. '*The River.*' The Eu-

phrates. The word Hebrew signifies 'from the other side,' and refers to the time when the ancestors of their race dwelt 'on the other side' of the great river Euphrates.

It is probable that, passing through the various countries and mixing, more or less, with the people, the Israelites had added to their worship of Jahveh, their tribal god, some observances to the gods of their neighbours. This Joshua will not have. 'Be true to one, choose for yourselves, but when you have chosen, be loyal. This lesson may well be emphasized by the teacher.

#### FIFTH SUNDAY.

READING. *Psalms lxxxix. 6-18.*

SETTING.—We are going to read a part of one of the Psalms to-day, written long after the settling down of the Israelites in Canaan, though the story of their escape from the land of Egypt is still remembered with joy and thankfulness. The people were now governed by a king, but it was still Jahveh who, in their eyes, really led the army—whose trumpet sound was known and followed by the happy faithful ones; and the poet records with pleasure that their king belongs to 'the Holy One of Israel.'

Who in the skies can be compared to Jahveh?

Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened to Jahveh?

God is greatly to be feared in the council of the saints, and to be had in reverence by all who are about him.

O Jahveh, God of Hosts, who is like to thee?

Strong art thou, O Jahveh, and thy faithfulness is round about thee.

Thou rulest the pride of the sea;

When it raiseth up its waves, thou stillest them.

Thou hast broken The Boaster (Egypt) like one who is slain.

By thy strong arm thou scatterest thine enemies.

Thine are the heavens; thine, also, is the earth:

The world, and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them:

Tabor and Hermon sing aloud in thy name.

Thou hast a mighty arm:

Strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.

Righteousness and justice are the foundations of thy throne:

Loving-kindness and truth go before thy face.

Happy the people that know thy trumpet-sound:

They walk, O Jahveh, in the light of thy countenance.

In thy name do they rejoice all the day; And in thy righteousness are they exalted.

For thou art the glory of their strength;

And by thy favour our horn is exalted.

For to Jahveh belongeth our shield,

And to the Holy One of Israel, our King.

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NOTES.—Ver. 10, *Rahab* in A.V. Ver. 18, Later translators all have this rendering, instead of 'The Holy One of Israel is our King' as in A.V.

In ver. 14 we see that other thoughts were growing; additions to Might are here attributed to Jahveh. Righteousness and justice, loving-kindness and truth, make

the moral condition of this poet's ideal a higher one. And gradually the praise of might and power is mingled, as centuries roll on, with wisdom and with love.

We do, however, still meet with the cruder ideas of God's power; as, for instance, in the belief in hell. Read the *Minister's Daughter*, p. 131. With Jesus' conception of his Heavenly Father love was above all; but still he could refer to the might when necessary. Turn to the chapter from which we took our reading on the first Sunday; *Mark* xii.; and in verses 13-17 we find Jesus being asked if he should render tribute to Cæsar. (Read this passage.) Now Jesus was wise as well as good, and he, too, felt the truth of the saying that 'when the strong command, obedience is best.' Cæsar's power was over almost all the known world; to resist was impossible, so he did not waste energy in counselling revolt, as did so many of his less wise compatriots. But while he told his hearers Cæsar must be obeyed, he is mighty; he adds, in effect, 'does not the same hold good with God, is he not mightier than Cæsar? well, then, if it is right and best to obey Cæsar, is it not right and best also that ye 'render unto God the things that are God's'?

'And shall we not adore Thee  
With more than joyous song,  
And live in truth before Thee,  
All beautiful and strong?  
Lord, bless our souls' endeavour  
Thy servants true to be,  
And through all life, for ever,  
To live our praise to Thee.'

The three short musical services given on pp. 145-149, entitled, 'The New Life: Service of Duty and Service of Thanks,' would be very appropriate to this series of lessons. They are so simple that the scholars would soon learn the responses by heart.

## FEBRUARY.

**God is wise, trust Him.**

### FIRST SUNDAY.

READING. From the Koran.

SETTING.—An old legend to be found in the Koran tells how Abraham came to acknowledge the presence of a wise Maker and Ruler behind the wonders of the earth and sky. Abraham, the forefather of those who came from beyond 'the River' (Euphrates), referred to in former readings, lived among people who paid homage to the heavenly bodies; and Fire, as the favourite symbol of the mighty Sun, was held in special honour also.

In this wise was shown unto Abraham the kingdom of heaven and earth, that he might become one of those who firmly believe.

When the night overshadowed him, Abraham saw a star, and he cried, 'This is my Lord!' But when it set, he said, 'I like not gods that set.'

And when he saw the moon rising, he said, 'This is my Lord.' But when he saw it set, he exclaimed, 'Verily, if my Lord is not ever with me to direct my path, I shall be found among those who go astray.'

And when Abraham saw the sun rising, he said, 'This is my Lord, this is the greatest.' But when it also set, he turned unto the people and cried, 'O my people, now indeed I see clearly whom we ought to worship; it is he who hath created the heavens and the earth, the sun, and moon, and stars; to him alone shall I henceforward direct my face!'



This revelation of God through his works comes to each sincere thinker at some moment. For years we may hear 'with our ears' of His mighty works, but the day comes to almost each one of us when 'we see with our eyes' the glorious presence of a Power divinely wise, as well as supremely mighty in strength; and then our hearts echo the words of Abraham, 'To him alone shall I henceforward direct my face!' Draw forth this thought by careful questions; the same sun and moon can be seen by us as by our friends afar off; this is a helpful thought. The article on the Rock Builders (p. 133) may help the teacher to draw forth an appreciation of the 'Power beyond.'

Read *Gen.* i. and ii. 1-3 with class. Here the Hebrew poet sings of the wonders of the universe and attempts reverently to find the method of creation. Though we may not accept his solution of the mystery in the light of the knowledge which has been gradually increasing since his time, yet his inmost thought contains the true spirit of religion. He saw that it was all 'very good.'

It may be well to note that this poem of the creation was not written so early in the childhood of the world as many other parts of the ancient Scriptures, so that it reflects a higher condition of mind in the writer than is seen in some of the former passages read. It is placed in Genesis as a natural commencement of the Book of Genesis, or Beginnings.

## SECOND SUNDAY.

READING. *Psalms* civ. 1-24.

SETTING. The writer of this old Hebrew song of praise was evidently quite familiar with the story of the creation given in the first chapter of Genesis, for his thoughts follow the same order. As his mind dwells on one marvellous work after another, his whole heart goes out in enthusiastic reverence for and admiration of the Lord our God.

Bless the Lord, O my soul.  
O Lord my God, thou art very great.  
Thou art clothed with honour and majesty!

He covereth himself with light as with a cloak;  
He stretcheth out the heavens like an awning;  
He resteth the beams of his chambers in the waters;  
He maketh the clouds his chariot;  
He goeth upon the wings of the wind;  
He maketh the winds his messengers,  
The flames of fire his servants;  
He established the earth on its foundations,  
That it should not be moved for ever and ever.

Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment;  
The waters stood above the mountains.  
At thy rebuke they fled;  
At the voice of thy thunder they hastened away.  
The mountains rose, the valleys sank down unto the place which thou hast founded for them.  
Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over;  
That they may not return to cover the earth.

He sendeth the springs into the valleys;  
They run between the hills.  
They give drink to every beast of the field;  
The wild asses quench their thirst.  
Near them dwell the birds of the heavens,

Who sing among the leafy branches.  
 He watereth the hills from his upper  
 chambers ;  
 The earth is satisfied with the fruit of  
 his works.  
 He causeth the grass to grow for the  
 cattle,  
 And herb for the service of man ;  
 That he may bring forth food out of  
 the earth ;—  
 The wine that maketh glad the heart  
 of man,  
 And oil to make his face to shine,  
 And bread which strengtheneth man's  
 heart.  
 The trees of the Lord are full of sap ;  
 The cedars of Lebanon, which he  
 hath planted ;  
 Where the birds make their nests.  
 As for the stork, the fir trees are her  
 house.  
 The high hills are for the wild goats ;  
 And the rocks a refuge for the conies.  
 He appointed the moon for the seasons ;  
 The sun knoweth its time for going down.  
 Thou makest the darkness, and it is  
 night ;  
 When all the beasts of the forest do  
 creep forth.  
 The young lions roar after their prey,  
 Seeking their food from God.  
 The sun ariseth, they get them away,  
 And lay themselves down in their dens.  
 Man goeth forth unto his work  
 And to his labour until the evening.  
 O Lord, how manifold are thy works !  
 In wisdom hast thou made them all ;  
 The earth is full of thy riches !

NOTES.—The changes of pronoun from second person to third, is often very confusing in the psalms. This mixing of the 'Thou' and 'He' is frequently due to the manner in which the passages were put together. This book of psalms, for instance, was 'edited' for use in Temple worship, and sometimes these songs were made up from several favorite passages.<sup>1</sup> The above reading might be effectively rendered in class by half the number taking up the recital of His wonderful works, and the others responding with the invocatory passages ; the first and last verses of the selection to be said by all, in full chorus. Such a rendering might help the scholars to catch the enthusiasm for this glorious poem that we should like them to have.

Ver. 2. A.V., *Curtains*. 'Awning' suggests a covering, which is the evident meaning. Ver. 4. A.V., *angels*, same as messenger. Breath, wind, spirit are all represented in Hebrew by the same word. *Flames of fire*, i.e. lightning. Ver. 8 and others, are altered from A.V. for greater clearness of meaning.

### THIRD SUNDAY.

READING. *Job xxviii.* 12-28.

SETTING.—The patriarch Job is here comparing the powers of man with those of God. He recognises the cleverness of man, who can dig down into the earth, and make pathways through the rock, where neither vulture nor lion may follow ; there through the darkness he can track the gold to its source, and find the home of silver and of precious stones. Yes, he can do all this ; but there is something more wonderful than these things. So he continues ;

But where shall wisdom be found ?  
 And where is the place of under-  
 standing ?  
 Man knoweth not the way thereof ;

<sup>1</sup> For further explanation see p. 214.

Neither is it found in the land of the living.

The Deep saith, It is not in me :

And the Sea saith, It is not with me.

It cannot be gotten for gold,

Neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof.

It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or with the sapphire.

The gold and the crystal cannot equal it : nor shall jewels of fine gold be taken in exchange.

Coral and crystal shall not be mentioned, for the price of Wisdom is above rubies.

The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it ; neither shall it be valued with pure gold.

Whence then cometh Wisdom ?

And where is the place of Under-  
standing ?

Seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and concealed from the birds of the air.

Destruction and Death say,

'We have heard a rumour thereof with our ears !'

God understandeth the way thereof

And he knoweth its place.

For he looketh to the ends of the earth,

And seeth under the whole heaven.

When he made the weight for the winds, and meted out the waters by measure,

When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the flash of the thunder,

Then did he see it, and declare it ;

He established it, yea, and searched it out.

And unto man he said,

'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom ;

And to depart from evil is understanding.'

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NOTES.—Ver. 13, A. V., *price*; *way* makes better sense. It is curious to note how variously rendered are the names of the precious stones in the different translations.

The first two readings this month refer to the wisdom displayed in the Creation of the Universe; here we have a further thought. Whence comes Wisdom? who can find it? who can track it to its source and gain possession of it, as man can with other precious things that are hidden from the sight of bird and beast. Man is clever, but God alone knoweth the home of Wisdom; none but He can thread the labyrinth that leadeth to the place where Wisdom dwells in all its native beauty.

If the teacher desires it, and the class is supplied with the Revised Version, this chapter may be taken from its commencement; for the description of the mine is grand. But parts of the original of the Book of Job are most obscure and, when the A. V. was made, scholars did not understand the text sufficiently well to enable them to make the translation intelligible in some places, notably in this one.

It is good to dwell on the last words of this thoughtful man on our subject. Seeing that we can only catch a glimpse of divine wisdom reflected here and there—and that only when our eyes are open to see—from the wonderful works of God, we must be careful not to act as though we held wisdom in our grasp. Things happen that we cannot understand, and we think our lot is hard, even unjust. Ah! but we do not *know*; wisdom, pure and simple, is not in our possession; let us trust God, then, who does know; whose works show



that He has the wisdom which we lack ; in that fear, or trust, as I prefer to call it, and in the keeping of his commandments lie man's best wisdom.

#### FOURTH SUNDAY.

Weary not thyself to be rich,  
Cease from thine own wisdom.  
Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which  
is not ?  
For riches certainly make themselves wings,  
Like an eagle that fieth toward heaven.  
*Prov. xxiii. 4, 5.*

READING. *Luke xii. 16-32.*

SETTING.—Jesus, the great Teacher, is in the midst of a crowd of listeners, when a man comes up to him, saying, 'Master, bid my brother divide the inheritance with me?' Jesus refuses to judge between the brothers ; but he does better, he appeals to their sense of right and wrong by warning them against covetousness, leaving them to apply the lesson for themselves. After all, says he, a man's life (the real part of him) consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

There is still something more that he wishes to make them see, and so

Jesus spake a parable unto them saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully ; and he reasoned within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, because I have not where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do ; I will pull down my barns, and build greater ; and there will I bestow my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years ; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry.'

But God said unto him, 'Thou foolish

one, this night is thy soul required of thee. And the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?'

So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

And Jesus said unto his disciples, 'I say unto you, Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat ; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. For the life is more than the food, and the body more than raiment.'

Consider the ravens ; they sow not, neither do they reap ; they have no store chamber nor barn ; and yet God feedeth them : of how much more value are ye than the birds !

And which of you, by being anxious, can add one cubit unto his span of life? If, then, ye are not able to do even that which is least, why are ye over careful for the rest?

Consider the lilies, how they grow : they toil not neither do they spin ; yet I say unto you, Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. And if God doth so clothe the grass in the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven ; how much more shall he clothe you, O ye of little faith?

Seek not ye what ye shall eat, and what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For after all these things do the nations of the world seek ; but your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. Howbeit seek ye his kingdom ; and these things shall be added unto you.

Fear not, little flock ; for it is your

Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

NOTES.—Ver. 25, A. V., *stature*. A cubit, length of forearm tip to elbow; roughly, twelve inches. Had Jesus intended to refer to an addition to the height, or stature, he would probably have taken a much smaller measure. The R. V. has 'age' in the margin; but a cubit has no apparent connection with age. Other students harmonise both translations by rendering the word 'span of life.'

These two passages, though here following directly upon one another, were evidently not given at the same time, but were only placed together by the writer of the account, probably because he considered they bore on similar subjects. The parable was spoken to the brothers who stood among a crowd, or multitude (verses 1, 13); the other teaching Jesus addressed specially to his disciples (ver. 22). The assertion, sometimes made, that Jesus here condemns thrift is quite beside the mark. He is not discussing that question at all—it is to the inheritance to which the parable refers. The one brother he has reminded that 'man's life consisted not of the abundance of the things he possesseth'; and to the other he points out the uselessness of hoarding up treasure in order to eat, drink, and be merry; for at any moment the owner thereof may be carried away from his wealth by the messenger of death. (For children an apt illustration may be given from the well-known story of the three cakes, where the miserly Peter hides away his cake in the box, and, when he comes to eat it secretly, he finds the mice have been before him).

The second passage—where Jesus is talking with his disciples and bids them not to be over anxious over small things, but to look to the greater things that lie before them,—is exactly what every leader of a party would be called upon to say to some of his more timid followers who hesitate to give themselves in whole-hearted fashion to

their mission. 'Fear not, little flock,' he says, 'seek ye his kingdom; and all these things shall be added unto you.'

Both these passages show how Jesus would have the theories of divine wisdom bring forth fruit in daily life and action. It is easy to say God is wise; but are we ready to act as though we believed Him to be so? Did the Master's disciples love the old Hebrew songs of praise? Did they revere the words of Job, and accept his teaching when he told them that all men's cleverness was as nothing to the wisdom of the most high? If so then let them 'fear God,'—trusting Him in deed and in truth,—and 'keep his commandments' in their daily lives. Such is his lesson to the *brothers*.

'Would we but live, even as we think  
'twas meant,  
All darkly though we see, our lives  
would speak  
As never preaching did, nor argument,  
But our hearts fail us, for our faith is  
weak.'

A. E. N. Bewicke.

The lesson Jesus gives to his *disciples* bears, as we have said, on a different matter; this would have been easily recognised had there been a break in the chapters here.

In order to understand the teaching we must try to picture to ourselves the place and the circumstances. We are often misled by phrases which are full of Eastern imagery and florid expressions, phrases quite well understood in those lands where poetic fancies pervade even the language of every day. The Master never intended that his followers should sit down and do nothing—and, indeed, science teaches that bird and flower both render active service—but that we should '*seek* God's kingdom' with diligence, and in his hands we may leave the issue of our lives. The lesson here may be summed up in the words of Longfellow,

'Do your duty, it is best,  
Leave unto the Lord the rest.'

## MARCH.

**God is full of loving kindness and mercy, therefore we will love Him.**

## FIRST SUNDAY.

READING. *Isaiah* xl. 9-14, 25-31.

SETTING.—Sorrow and trouble had again fallen on the Hebrew nation. Some of the tribes were no more, others had been carried away into a foreign land. But hope is at last springing up once again in their breasts; for they have received permission to return to their beloved Jerusalem. In our reading for to-day the poet-prophet gives utterance to their joy and thankfulness to their mighty God, who is once more looking with favour on his people—his, as they think, in a very special sense.

O thou that bringest good tidings to Zion !  
 Get thee up upon the high mountain ;  
 Thou that bringest good tidings to Jerusalem !  
 Lift up thy voice with strength.  
 Lift it up, be not afraid ;  
 Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God !  
 Behold, the Lord God will come with might,  
 And his arm shall rule for him :  
 Behold, his reward is with him :  
 And his recompense before him.  
 He shall feed his flock like a shepherd ;  
 He shall gather the lambs in his arm,  
 And carry them in his bosom ;  
 He shall gently lead those that have young ones.  
 Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out the heavens with a span ?

Who hath gathered up the dust of the earth in a measure,  
 And weighed the mountains in scales,  
 and the hills in a balance ?  
 Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being his counsellor, hath taught him ?

With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him,  
 And taught him in the path of Judgment, and taught him Knowledge,  
 And made known to him the way of Understanding ?

‘To whom then will ye liken me, to whom shall I be equal ?’ saith the Holy One.

Lift up your eyes on high, and behold !  
 Who hath created these things ? ,  
 When he bringeth out their host innumerable ;

He calleth them all by name ;  
 By the greatness of his might and strong power, not one faileth.

Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel,

‘My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over by my God’ ?

Hast thou not known ? hast thou not heard,

That the everlasting God, the Lord,  
 The Creator of the ends of the earth,  
 Fainteth not, neither is weary ?

There is no searching of his reasons.

He giveth power to the faint ;  
 And to them that are feeble he increaseth strength.

Though the youth faint and become weary,



And the young men stumble and fall,  
 Yet they that wait upon the Lord shall  
 renew their strength;  
 They shall mount up with wings as  
 the eagles;  
 They shall run, and not be weary;  
 They shall walk, and not faint.

NOTES.—The alterations from the A.V. are not serious ones, though they render the sense clearer. The arrangement of the lines in blank verse is taken from C. Well-beloved. Verses 12-14 are very similar to the passage in *Job* xxviii. 25, 26.

This passage mainly exalts the might and wisdom of the God of the Hebrews, it is true; but here and there, notably in ver. 11, we have evidence that the poet-prophet is beginning to go beyond the attributes of power and wisdom in his conception of the Holy One, and has glimpses of his divine pity and tender love for *his* people; not, for a long time yet, though, for *all* the children of men.

#### SECOND SUNDAY.

'There is no place where earth's sorrows  
 Are more felt than up in Heaven;  
 There is no place where earth's failings  
 Have such kindly judgment given.

'For the love of God is wider  
 Than the measure of man's mind;  
 And the heart of the Eternal  
 Is most wonderfully kind.'

—Faber.

#### READING. *Psal* ciii.

SETTING.—A song of thankfulness for all God's goodness to man. We cannot tell when it was written, but the Hebrew poet has entered into the thought of the loving kindness of God; and his words have found an echo in every happy heart that has heard them since his time.

Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all  
 that is within me, bless his holy  
 name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget  
 not all his benefits.

Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;  
 who healeth all thy diseases;

Who redeemeth thy life from destruc-  
 tion; who crowneth thee with lov-  
 ing kindness and tender mercies;

Who satisfieth thy years with good  
 things; so that thy youth is  
 renewed like the eagle's.

The Lord executeth righteousness,  
 And judgments for all that are op-  
 pressed.

He made known his ways unto Moses,  
 His deeds unto the children of Israel.

The Lord is merciful and gracious,  
 Slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

He will not always chide, neither will  
 he keep his anger for ever.

He hath not dealt with us after our  
 sins; nor rewarded us according  
 to our iniquities.

For as the heavens are high above the  
 earth; so great is his kindness  
 toward them that fear him.

As far as the east is from the west,  
 So far hath he removed our transgres-  
 sions from us.

Like as a father pitieth his children,  
 So the Lord pitieth them that fear him.  
 For he knoweth our frame;  
 He remembereth that we are dust.

As for man, his days are as grass;  
 As a flower of the field, so he flourisheth,

For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

But the love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him,

And his righteousness unto children's children,

To those who keep his covenant,  
And remember his commandments to do them.

The Lord hath established his throne in the heavens;

And his kingdom ruleth over all.

Bless the Lord, ye his angels;  
Ye mighty in strength, who do his bidding,

Hearkening to the voice of his commands.

Bless ye the Lord, all ye his hosts;  
Ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

Bless the Lord all ye his works, in all places of his dominion;

Bless the Lord, O my soul.

NOTES.—This glorious psalm should be gone through carefully, the poetic beauties being pointed out, the teacher laying stress on verses 11-13. Compare this '*like as a father*' with the selections of the third and fourth Sundays in January, and point out what a much higher ideal of the Divine Ruler is here portrayed. Jesus may have had the thought of verses 15-16 in his mind when he spoke to his disciples, *Luke* xii. 28.

'Religion is, after all, beyond the range of mere tuition . . . . It is a spirit; a life; an aspiration; a contagious glory from soul to soul; a spontaneous union with God. . . . To love and to do the Holy Will is the ultimate way, not only to know the truth but to lead others to know it too.'

JAMES MARTINEAU.

### THIRD SUNDAY.

'The dear God who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all.'—  
—Coleridge.

READING. *Luke* xv. 11-32.

SETTING.—Jesus is again surrounded by listeners. Some taxgatherers and outcasts had gathered around, eagerly taking in the words of the Teacher who, instead of thrusting them out of his way, drew near to them, dropping hope instead of despair into their stricken hearts. The Pharisees and Scribes standing near were scandalised that one, whom some even called Master, should hold intercourse with such people. Jesus looks up and asks if they would not rejoice if a friend had recovered a sheep which had gone astray, or with another who had found a piece of silver which she had lost. Will they not rejoice with him if he can win back a man or a woman who has strayed from the right fold? The angels in heaven would rejoice at such glad tidings! Still there are cold looks of disapproval on the faces of those self-righteous men, and Jesus speaks again.

And he said, A certain man had two sons: and the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of thy substance that falleth to me,' and he divided unto them his living.

And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country; and there he wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that country; and he began to be in want, and he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have been filled

with the husks that the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him.

But when he came to himself he said, 'How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants.'

And he arose, and came to his father. But while he was yet afar off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

And the son said unto him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight; I am no more worthy to be called thy son.'

But the father said to his servants, 'Bring forth quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and bring the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and make merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to be merry.

Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called to him one of the servants, and enquired what these things might be.

And he said unto him, 'Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.' And he

was angry, and would not go in; and his father came out, and intreated him.

But he answered and said to his father, 'Lo, these many years do I serve thee, and I never transgressed a commandment of thine; and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends; but when this thy son came, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou killedst for him the fatted calf.'

And he said unto him, 'Son, thou art ever with me, and all that is mine is thine. But it was meet to make merry and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.'

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NOTES.—Here in this parable we catch a real glance into the meaning of God to Jesus; He whom he loved with a supreme love, and trusted with such absolute trust.

Let the teacher be careful to connect the story with what has gone before; otherwise the scholars may think the elder son was hardly used. He personates the self-righteous Pharisee who disapproves of the efforts of Jesus to seek and to save those who were lost. Thrifty, industrious, he might have been, but had his love for his brother been akin to that of the dear father, what joy would have been his, what rejoicing to have felt that his companion and brother had turned away from the wickedness that he had committed and was now going to do what was lawful and right. But his one idea was of himself, of his virtues, of what he merited. Refer to the parable of the Pharisee and Publican, *Luke* xviii. 9-14.

The conduct of the elder son is, however, only of secondary importance in the parable; the main point is that the loving kindness of a good father is the best symbol of the Heavenly Father.



## FOURTH SUNDAY.

'Beloved, now are we children of God.'—

1 John iii. 2.

SETTING.—God is mighty, fear Him; God is wise, trust Him; God is full of loving kindness, let us love Him.

By these steps men have drawn nearer to the Most High, and gradually as we learn, not only to say, but to *realise* the meaning of our belief that the Ruler of all things is wise and loving as well as mighty, the unworthy thoughts that still disturb the faith of some earnest seekers after Him, will pass away.

Our reading to-day shall be from a sweet fanciful vision of the poet Whittier, who therein desires to show that if we realise the mightiness of God's love, fear of an eternal hell must fade away.

## THE TWO ANGELS.

God called the nearest angels  
Who dwell with Him above;  
The tenderest one was Pity,  
The dearest one was Love.

'Arise,' He said, 'my angels!  
A wail of woe and sin  
Steals through the gates of heaven,  
And saddens all within.

'My harps take up the mournful strain  
That from a lost world swells,  
The smoke of torment clouds the light,  
And blights the asphodels.

'Fly downward to that under world,  
And, on its souls of pain,  
Let Love drop smiles like sunshine,  
And Pity tears like rain.'

Two faces bowed before the throne  
Veiled in their golden hair;  
Four white wings lessened swiftly down  
The dark abyss of air.

The way was strange, the flight was long;  
At last the angels came  
Where swung the lost and nether world,  
Red wrapped in rayless flame.

There Pity, shuddering, wept; but Love  
WITH FAITH TOO STRONG FOR FEAR,  
TOOK HEART FROM GOD'S ALMIGHTINESS,  
And smiled a smile of cheer.

And lo! that tear of Pity  
Quenched the flame whereon it fell,  
And with the sunshine of that smile,  
Hope entered into hell!

Two unveiled faces full of joy  
Looked upward to the throne,  
Four white wings folded at the feet  
Of Him who sate thereon.

And, deeper than the sound of seas,  
More soft than falling flake,  
Amidst the hush of wing and song  
The Voice Eternal spake:

'Welcome, my angels, ye have brought  
A holier joy to heaven;  
Henceforth its sweetest song shall be  
The song of sin forgiven.'

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NOTES.—After a little chat over this beautiful poem, it will be well for the teacher to go over the three months' section just completed, making use of the questions he has entered in his note book. Point out the great step made when, to the thought of *might* was added that of *wisdom*, and the still greater advance when *divine love* was added to the attributes of the great Ruler. The thought of the power of Jahveh made the people fear and dread him; with Jesus, perfect love of his Heavenly Father cast out all fear; and in Whittier's poem we have the expression of

that beautiful truth that Love rejoices in the thought of God's almightiness, takes heart from the remembrance of it, and in the radiance of her smile Hope enters everywhere.

*Psalm c.* may be read in class at the close of this lesson.

## INTERLUDE.

### THE THREE SONS.

In the days of old there once lived a mighty king who had three sons. The eldest was brave and strong, ready to defend the cause of the weak and to withstand the tyranny of the oppressor.

The second son was a lover of knowledge and of wisdom; all his youth had been passed in studying the laws by which the universe is governed; and at this time his fame for learning had spread throughout the world.

The youngest son was a poet. He looked out over the fields, he beheld the starry skies, he noted the beauty of every living thing; and in them all he saw traces of the divine love. As he grew into manhood, the gentleness of his bearing, the sweetness of his spirit, and the joy of his countenance, made all men draw near unto him, rejoicing in his very presence.

And the king called his sons to him and said, 'My sons, I am going on a far journey, and I leave my country in your keeping. Let each one do his best for my people, so that, on my return, I may rejoice in their well-being.'

And the three princes were obedient to their father. The eldest one called

the people together and taught them how to exercise their muscles, how to develop their strength of body, keenness of sight, and steadiness of nerve.

The second prince formed schools throughout the land where boys and girls, youths and maidens, were instructed in all the knowledge of the times, and taught to seek for wisdom on every hand.

As for the youngest son, he went about among the people speaking to his willing listeners of the true meaning of life. He showed them how beautiful is the world to those who have eyes to see, he told them of the love that lies at the heart of all things, and he kindled within them a divine enthusiasm for all that was pure, and beautiful, and true.

And thus it came to pass that when the king, their father, returned to his kingdom, he found that each son had done his part, having given of his best for the welfare of the nation. And he rejoiced exceedingly; for his beloved people had become strong in body, wise in mind, and true and loving in heart, so that all men everywhere came to regard the dwellers of that land with love and reverence.

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Think your best,  
Love the best,  
Do your best.

—C. L. Corkran,  
S. S. Address, 1891.

Have patience! Things are always difficult before they are easy.

—*Persian Proverb.*

## Second Section.

‘Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children.’—*Eph. v. 1 R.V.*

APRIL.

**Be Strong.**

FIRST SUNDAY.

READING. *Joshua i. 1-9.*

SETTING. — Moses, after leading the Israelites out of Egypt and through the desert, up to the land of Canaan, is now dead, having left to his faithful Joshua the task of gaining an entrance there.

Now it came to pass after the death of Moses, the servant of Jahveh, that Jahveh spake to Joshua the son of Nun, the minister of Moses, saying, ‘Moses, my servant, is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, to the land which I give to them, even the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given to you, as I said unto Moses. From the desert and this Lebanon, even unto the great River, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your boundary.

No man shall be able to stand against thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, neither will I forsake thee. Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land, which I swear unto their fathers to give

them. Only be thou strong and very courageous, to observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded thee; turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.

Let not this book of the law depart out of thy mouth; but meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. Have I not commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for Jahveh thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

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NOTES.—*The Great Sea toward the going down of the sun*, the Mediterranean.

It will be well to have out the map, and note the boundaries. This large extent of country was never held by the Israelites, but it was constantly in the mind of this people that some day, under the guidance of their mighty Jahveh, they would conquer the nations far and near.

Be strong, be steadfast; this is the first charge—nothing could be done in early times without strength.

Strength is to be sought for to-day also; a healthy mind in a healthy body is what we should all desire. That the importance of strength was understood in early days is seen by the stories told of ancient heroes, and for the next three Sundays we will take up some of these ancient legends.

‘I do not advocate people trying to keep well, out of a cowardly fear of being ill, or suffering pain, or losing life; but as a religious duty, in order that they may render unto God the full service He demands of them.’

JAMES HINTON,



## SECOND SUNDAY.

READING. *Judges xvi. 16-30.*

SETTING.—Whenever we read stories of the childhood of the world we constantly come across heroes who are famous for their strength. Among the Hebrew traditions we are told of one, Samson by name, of whom the most wonderful deeds are told; how he slew the Philistines by thousands—the enemies of his people—how he set their fields of corn on fire and destroyed them, and how he even wrenched out and carried off the very gates of the city. But alas for Samson; strong though he was in body, he was weak in character, and easily turned from his purpose. His downfall comes. A woman of the Philistines, Delilah by name, persuades him, after trying in vain to do so two or three times, to tell the secret of his strength.

And it came to pass when Delilah pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, so that his soul was vexed unto death, he told her all his mind, and said to her, ‘There hath not come a razor upon my head; for I have been a Nazirite to God from my birth: if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man.’ And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, ‘Come up once more; for he hath told me all his heart.’ Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her, and brought money in their hand. And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for a man, and caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him. And

he awoke out of his sleep, and said, ‘I will go forth as at former times, and shake myself.’ For he knew not that Jahveh had departed from him. But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison-house.

Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven.

Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon, their god, and to rejoice: for they said, ‘Our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand.’ And when the people saw him they praised their god; for they said, ‘Our god hath delivered into our hands our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, who hath slain many of us.’

And when their hearts were merry, they said, ‘Call for Samson, that he may make us sport.’ And they called for Samson out of the prison-house; and he made them sport; and they set him between the pillars.

And Samson said to the lad who held him by the hand, ‘Suffer me to feel the pillars on which the house standeth, that I may lean upon them.’

Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there: and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, who were looking on while Samson made sport.

And Samson called to Jahveh, and said, ‘O Lord Jahveh, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray

thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.' Then Samson took hold of the two middle pillars on which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left. And Samson said, 'Let me die with the Philistines.' And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein: so the dead whom he slew at his death were more than those whom he had slain in his life.

NOTES.—This legend is akin to what are called Nature myths. The Sleeping Beauty is one of these Eastern allegories, where we are told how the princess, the earth, has been bound in sleep by the cruel winter, only to awake when the princely sun presses his warm kiss on her sweet face. The name Samson (solar) indicates something of the origin of this story; the fiery rays of the tropical sun which sets whole fields on fire, and strikes men down with the might of his heat, are here personified, and possibly intermingled with stories of an ancient hero. The power of the sun is in his rays; let these be cut off and his strength departs, even as did Samson's when he was shorn of his long hair; only when it commenced to grow again did he regain his power.

It will be well for the teacher to take this story simply as an early legend and not try to force into it some special spiritual meaning. We tell our scholars that the Bible is a library of books, some of which contain the most beautiful aspirations and sublime truths, others record events of deepest interest, while others again give the legendary lore and tradition of the early times of the Jewish nation. The story of Samson belongs to the last mentioned division; it is good for us all to have examples of each.

The reading round should commence at verse 20. *Nazirite*, v. 17. See *Num.* vi. 2-5.

The story will lead the way for a chat on the advantages of strength, not only that it will help us to hold our own against the oppressor, but also because it will enable us to help others. 'You're no good; you're not strong enough,' is not pleasant hearing when we offer our help.

But strength of body is not enough; if we are easily led, if we are not steadfast, we shall be led astray into wrong paths, and presently when we need our strength we shall find that it has deserted us.

'Be ye imitators of God,' says the apostle Paul. God is strong; strength is a good thing; let us strive to win it.

### THIRD SUNDAY.

'By their fruits ye shall know them. Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.'—*Matt.* vii. 21, 22.

READING. St. Christopher. From Mrs. Jameson's 'Sacred and Legendary Art.'

SETTING.—In the mighty hero of the story we are to read to-day we have a far more beautiful type of true strength than in Samson. St. Christopher is supposed to have lived in the fourth century, A.D., and is called one of the early Christian saints. Around the names of good and faithful men and women all kinds of strange and marvellous stories come into being, and many of these may be called allegories, or parables; some, like those which tell of St. Christopher, contain thoughts of great beauty and truth.

Christopher was of the land of Canaan, and the name by which he was there known was Offero. He was a man of colossal stature, and of a terrible aspect, and being proud of his

vast bulk and strength, he was resolved that he would serve no other than the greatest and the most powerful monarch that existed. So he travelled far and wide to seek this greatest of kings; and at length he came to the court of a certain monarch who was said to exceed in power and riches all the kings of the earth, and he offered to serve him. And the king, seeing his great height and strength,—for, surely, since the Giant of Gath there had been none like to him,—entertained him with joy.

Now it happened one day, as Christopher stood by the king in his court, there came a minstrel who sang before the king, and, in his story there was frequent mention of the devil; and every time the king heard the name of the evil spirit he crossed himself. Christopher enquired the reason of this gesture, but the king did not answer. Then said Christopher, 'If thou tellest me not, I leave thee!' So the king told him: 'I make that sign to preserve me from the power of Satan, for I fear lest he overcome me and slay me.' Then said Christopher, 'If thou fearest Satan, then thou art not the most powerful prince in the world; thou hast deceived me. I will go seek this Satan, and him will I serve; for he is mightier than thou art.' So he departed, and he travelled far and wide; and as he crossed a desert plain, he beheld a great crowd of armed men, and at their head marched a terrible and frightful being, with the air of a conqueror: and he stopped Christopher on his path, say-

ing, 'Man, where goest thou?' And Christopher answered, 'I go to seek Satan, because he is the greatest prince in the world, and him would I serve.' Then the other replied, 'I am he: seek no farther.' Then Christopher bowed down before him, and entered his service; and they travelled on together.

Now, when they had journeyed a long, long way, they came to a place where four roads met, and there was a cross by the way-side. When the evil one saw the cross he was seized with fear, and trembled violently; and he turned back, and made a great circuit to avoid it. When Christopher saw this he was astonished, and inquired, 'Why hast thou done so?' and the devil answered not. Then said Christopher, 'If thou tellest me not, I leave thee.' So being thus constrained, the fiend replied, 'Upon that cross died Jesus Christ, and when I behold it I must tremble and fly, for I fear him.' Then Christopher was more and more astonished; and he said, 'How, then! this Jesus, whom thou fearest, must be more potent than thou art! I will go seek him, and him will I serve!' So he left the devil, and travelled far and wide, seeking Christ; and having sought him for many days, he came to the cell of a holy hermit, and desired of him that he would show him Christ. Then the hermit began to instruct him diligently, and said, 'This king, whom thou seekest, is, indeed, the great king of heaven and earth; but if thou wouldst



serve him, he will impose many and hard duties on thee. Thou must fast often.' And Christopher said, 'I will not fast; for surely, if I were to fast my strength would leave me.' 'And thou must pray!' added the hermit. Said Christopher, 'I know nothing of prayers, and I will not be bound to such a service.' Then said the hermit, 'Knowest thou a certain river, strong and wide and deep, and often swelled by the rains, and wherein many people perish who attempt to pass over?' And he answered, 'I know it.' Then said the hermit, 'Since thou wilt neither fast nor pray, go to that river, and use thy strength to aid and to save those who struggle with the stream, and those who are about to perish. It may be that this good work shall prove acceptable to Jesus Christ, whom thou desirest to serve; and that he may manifest himself to thee!' To which Christopher replied, joyfully, 'This can I do. It is a service that pleaseth me well!' So he went as the hermit had directed, and he dwelt by the side of the river; and having rooted up a palm tree from the forest,—so strong he was and tall,—he used it for a staff to support and guide his steps, and he aided those who were about to sink, and the weak he carried on his shoulders across the stream; and by day and by night he was always ready for his task, and failed not, and was never wearied of helping those who needed help.

So the thing he did pleased our Lord, who looked down upon him out

of heaven, and said within himself, 'Behold, this strong man, who knoweth not yet the way to worship me, yet hath found the way to serve me!'

NOTES.—'By their fruits ye shall know them' is the lesson that will come naturally from the above story. This legend goes on to tell how once a little child asked to be carried across. The strong man took him into his arms, but as he went the weight of the child increased more and more. At length the other side was reached, and the child declared himself to be the 'Lord Jesus,' who thus showed his acceptance of service from Offero, who was henceforth called Christopher.

Other stories are told of how Christopher learnt to control himself, so that he received a blow and struck not again; how he was cast into prison and tempted in all things without yielding; and finally, submitted to scourging, torture and death, without fear, trusting in the Lord.

—There is another beautiful thought that people had of this hero in the old days. It was said, 'Whoso shall behold the image of St. Christopher, on that day shall not faint or fail,' and great pictures or statues were placed about so that people might look on them and gather strength for their trials. The remembrance of those who have resisted temptation and who have borne themselves well is indeed one of our greatest helps in time of stress, for we say to ourselves, 'What man has done, man can do,' and this thought gives us strength and confidence.

'The tidal wave of deeper souls,  
Into our inmost being rolls,  
And lifts us unawares  
Out of all meaner cares.

'Honour to those whose words or deeds  
Thus help us in our daily needs,  
And by their overflow,  
Raise us from what is low.'

—*Longfellow.*

## FOURTH SUNDAY.

'Prepare thy work without, and make it ready in the field ;  
Go afterwards and build thy house.'—  
*Prov. xxiv. 27.*

READING. *1 Sam. xvii. 20-24 (8, 9), 32-51.*

SETTING.—The favourite hero of the Hebrews was David, famed alike for bravery and courage on the one hand, and for music and song on the other. We are told that he was the youngest of eight brothers, and that as a young man his duty was to mind his father's flocks—not always an easy task, where attacks of wild beasts were to be dreaded. The three eldest sons had gone to fight for their country, and we can imagine how the young patriot, David, longed to help in ridding the land of its enemy. So he gladly obeyed his father when ordered to carry down food to his brethren.

And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took the food, and went, as Jesse his father had commanded him ; and he came to the barrier as the host was going forth to the fight, shouting for the battle. And Israel and the Philistines drew up in battle array, army against army.

And David left the things he had with him in the hand of a keeper of the baggage, and ran into the army, and came and saluted his brethren. And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake the same words as he had uttered the day before, namely, 'Why are ye

come out, drawn in battle array ? am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul ? Choose you a man, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants ; but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us.' And David heard these words. And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him and were greatly afraid.

And David said to king Saul, 'Let no man's heart fail because of *him* ; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine.' And Saul said to David, 'Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him ; for thou art but a young man, and he a man of war from his youth.' And David said unto Saul, 'I thy servant kept my father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock ; and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth : and when he arose against me, I caught him by the beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear ; and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.' David said moreover, 'Jahveh who delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.' And Saul said unto David, 'Go, and Jahveh be with thee.'

And Saul clothed David with his own garments, and he put a helmet of

brass upon his head, and clothed him with a coat of mail, and David girded his sword upon his garments; and he tried in vain, for he had not proved them. Then David said unto Saul, 'I cannot go in these; for I have not tried them.' And David put them off him. And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, in the pouch thereof; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine. And the Philistine came on, drawing nigh unto David; and the man that bare the shield went before him.

And when the Philistine looked, and saw David, he disdained him; for he was but a youth and ruddy, and had a fair countenance. And the Philistine said unto David, 'Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves?' And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. And the Philistine said unto David, 'Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.'

Then said David to the Philistine, 'Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a javelin; but I come to thee in the name of Jahveh of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will Jahveh deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there

is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that Jahveh saveth not with the sword and spear; for the battle is Jahveh's, and he will give you into our hands.'

And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, so that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the ground.

So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; and there was no sword in the hand of David. Then David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled.

NOTES.—This is a fine old story, and its dramatic power makes it a favourite one with children.

Contrast the two heroes, Samson and David. Although in order to give honour to Samson commentators assume him to have been inspired by love of his country in his attacks against the Philistines, from the Biblical account it is clear that his hatred of them and desire for revenge are results of personal feeling.

With David it is quite different. A parallel might well be taken from the history of Joan of Arc. Both, while watching their flocks, are full of anxious thought of the perils of their country, both are ready to devote themselves in their country's service.

The special lesson that is suggested is that of the necessity of preparation. The wish to help in any direction is not enough; we must so train our powers that when our opportunity comes we may be found ready. For instance, had David not prepared himself by exercising the sling, he would not have been able to make use of it in his hour of trial. So with strength of body, and so with strength of soul, we must *will* to learn and not only *wish* 'to be.'

MAY.

### Seek Wisdom.

'Precious and divine is knowledge, for it shall be hewn from the earth to make steps to the altar of God.'

—*Psalms of the West.*

In ancient Greece men who had spent their years seeking for wisdom were called the Sages, the Wise, until the time of Pythagoras. To him came a man who asked, 'Art thou the Sage?'

And Pythagoras answered, 'Call me not the Sage, for no one is wise but God; call me, if you will, a *lover of wisdom*.' And since that day seekers after wisdom have no longer been known as Sages, but as Philosophers, from two Greek words, meaning 'lover of wisdom.'

FIRST SUNDAY.

READING. *1 Kings* iii. 5-15.

SETTING.—The young man, David, of whom we read last Sunday, in due time became king of the Hebrew nation, and his name was afterwards held in highest reverence and love. On his death he was succeeded by Solomon, one of his sons. In those troublous days when the people were by no means united in their wish to have this son of David's rather than one of the

others as their king, to sit upon the throne was a task even more difficult than in ordinary times, and Solomon may well have been anxious. Who could help him? Who but Jahveh, his nation's God? We read:—

And Jahveh appeared unto Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, 'Ask what I shall give thee.' And Solomon said, 'Thou hast shewed unto thy servant David my father great kindness, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day.

'And now, O Jahveh my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered, nor counted for multitude. Give thy servant therefore an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this thy great people?'

And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, 'Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; behold, I have done according to thy word: lo, I have



given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so there hath been none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any rise like unto thee.

‘And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour, so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee, all thy days. And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.’

And Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream.

NOTES.—Ver. 7. *Little child*—speaking figuratively, of course, for he was a grown man. This story is also given in *2 Chron.* i. 7-12, but more shortly. In illustration of the special kind of wisdom for which Solomon was so famed the well known story of the Judgment of Solomon (*1 Kings* iii. 16-27) may be told.

Explain that this refers to what is *one* branch of wisdom only, but a very necessary one; it is the power of discernment, of looking beneath the surface and seeing the cause of the difficulty; a knowledge of which will help to point to what decision, what judgment, should be given.

A story is told how a woman saved her city from destruction by this kind of wisdom. It is said that when David became king a certain man rebelled against him, Sheba by name. And David sent his mighty general, Joab, and his troops after Sheba to the city where he was, and they began to batter down the walls. But a wise woman called to Joab, telling him that she was among the peaceful and faithful ones, and asked him why he would destroy the city. And when she heard that it was just for the sake of one rebel, she, evidently feeling, as a familiar song so well puts it,

that

‘They would make the quarrel  
Should be the only ones to fight,’

decided that Sheba should pay the penalty of death and so save the whole city from being given up to bloodshed and destruction (*2 Sam.* xx.). It is not suggested that this story should be read, for it is a gruesome one at best, though when viewed in relation to the existing state of things we may take it as the wisest policy the people of that city could have adopted.

The Preacher in *Ecclesiastes* (ix. 13-16, 18) speaks thus,

‘I have also seen wisdom under the sun in this wise, and it seemed great unto me.

‘There was a little city and few men within it; and there came a great king against it and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it. Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city.

“Then said I, “Wisdom is better than strength; wisdom is better than weapons of war.”’

NOTE.—I have omitted the clause relating to the forgetfulness of the poor man (verses 15, 16) because these words do not bear on this lesson.

And this same kind of wisdom we all need even in the little things of daily life—it may be when we have our brothers and sisters to mind, and there is a disagreement, perhaps a quarrel. How difficult it is to decide the rights of the matter; we need to try to understand the cause, for only then can we apply the remedy, or give fair judgment. Try to make the scholars give instances of this; a little careful questioning may bring out some very interesting examples; and it is good for them to see that wisdom is as necessary for us in our daily lives as it was for King Solomon on his mighty throne.

## SECOND SUNDAY.

READING. 1 *Kings* iv. 25, 29-34 ;  
x. 1-3.

SETTING.—The reign of King Solomon was a 'golden age,' according to the accounts which have come down to us. The wonderful Temple of Solomon and the other palaces and buildings that he caused to be erected were monuments of his ability, wealth, and power, which remained long after his death. That there is another side of the picture is true; he was a mighty despot, and as soon as he was gone the discontent of the people was apparent; but yet his was what might fitly be called a glorious reign, and many of the things we read about him remind us of a wonderful Eastern story.

And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all the days of Solomon.

And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea-shore. And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the East, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men: and his fame was in all the nations round about.

And he spake three thousand proverbs; and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things and of fishes.

And there came some of all the peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon,

from all kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom.

And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon which Jahveh had given him, she came to prove him with hard questions.

And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold and precious stones.

And when she was come to Solomon she spake to him of all that was in her heart. And Solomon answered all her questions; there was not anything hidden from the king which he told her not.

And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom of Solomon, and the house that he had built, and the food of his table, and the assemblage of his servants, and the array of his attendants and their apparel, and his cup-bearers, and his burnt offering which he offered in the House of Jahveh, she was amazed beyond measure.

And she said to the king, 'It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thine acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words until I came, and mine eyes had seen it; and behold, the half was not told me. Thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, that stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom.'

NOTES.—Ver. 5. C. Wellbeloved's translation seemed better here than A.V. In

connection with the above the following poem of Whittier's may be read. According to ancient traditions Solomon not only could tell all about trees and birds, beasts and fishes, but could understand their language. The old legend, here put into verse by the poet, emphasizes the words in *1 Kings* iv. 29, where in addition to wisdom Solomon is credited with 'largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea-shore.'

N.B.—The teacher will need to read through the poem carefully first, as the metre is difficult to catch; the rhyming, it will be noted, is between the first and fourth lines, and the second and third.

### KING SOLOMON AND THE ANTS.

Out from Jerusalem  
The king rode with his great  
War chiefs and lords of state,  
And Sheba's queen with them.

Proud in the Syrian sun,  
In gold and purple sheen,  
The dusky Ethiop queen  
Smiled on king Solomon.

Wisest of men, he knew  
The languages of all  
The creatures great or small  
That trod on the earth, or flew.

Across an ant-hill led  
The king's path, and he heard  
Its small folk, and their word  
He thus interpreted:

'Here comes the king men greet  
As wise and good and just,  
To crush us in the dust  
Under his heedless feet.'

The great king bowed his head,  
And saw the wide surprise  
Of the queen of Sheba's eyes  
As he told her what they said.

'O King!' she whispered sweet,  
'Too happy fate have they  
Who perish in thy way  
Beneath thy gracious feet!'

'Thou of the God-lent crown,  
Shall these vile creatures dare  
Murmur against thee where  
The knees of kings kneel down?'

'Nay,' Solomon replied,  
'The wise and strong should seek  
The welfare of the weak,'  
And turned his horse aside.

His train, with quick alarm,  
Curved with their leader round  
The ant-hill's peopled mound,  
And left it free from harm.

The jewelled head bent low;  
'O King!' she said, 'henceforth  
The secret of thy worth  
And wisdom well I know.

'Happy must be the state  
Whose ruler heedeth more  
The murmurs of the poor  
Than flatteries of the great.'

There is a wisdom which touches the higher emotions as well as that which has to do with the mind. The tradition of Solomon and the ants contains this higher wisdom; that, namely, which resisting flattery, steadfastly seeks to obey God's laws of justice and mercy to all creatures everywhere.

Application:—Boys and girls are tempted to overlook the just rights of little brothers and sisters sometimes, who are often plainly shown that to be noticed at all is almost more than they have a right to expect! Let them remember King Solomon, and follow his example in his consideration for the ants, the least of his subjects.

### THIRD SUNDAY.

READING. *Proverbs* iii. 13-24.

SETTING.—Having seen how the name of Solomon was renowned for wisdom, we can easily understand how the many and wise sayings revered by the Jewish nation would

be ascribed to him. Some of them are to be found in the Proverbs of Solomon, where we may read the following beautiful passage.

Happy is the man that findeth wisdom,  
And the man that getteth understanding.

For the merchandise of it is better than  
the merchandise of silver,  
And the gain thereof than fine gold.  
She is more precious than rubies :  
And all thou canst desire is not to be  
compared unto her.

Length of days is in her right hand ;  
In her left are riches and honour.  
Her ways are ways of pleasantness,  
And all her paths are peace.  
She is a tree of life to them that lay  
hold upon her ;

And happy is every one that keepeth  
her fast.

The Lord by wisdom founded the earth ;  
By understanding he established the  
heavens,

By his knowledge the depths were  
broken up,  
And by it the skies drop down the dew.

My son, let not these depart from  
thine eyes ;

Keep sound wisdom and discretion ;  
So shall they be life unto thy soul,  
And grace to thy neck.

Then shalt thou walk in thy way  
securely,

And thy foot shall not stumble.

When thou liest down thou shalt  
not be afraid :

Yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy  
sleep shall be sweet.

NOTES.—This beautiful passage might be with advantage learnt by both the teacher and his class.

Wisdom is gained when, having learnt the laws of God, we live in harmony with them ; then all must be well with us, no matter what troubles or trials may arise. On the surface it appears as though many of these exhortations to good living in the Book of Proverbs are simply maxims of worldly wisdom, a means of gaining prosperity—and, indeed, in those days it was generally held that worldly success was the result of virtue and wisdom. (In this way the glorious reign of King Solomon would make people feel that his wisdom must have been extreme ; the one idea would act and re-act on the other.) But the root thought, undoubtedly, as Professor Moulton says, of the writers, ‘is not to bribe with offers of advantage, but to exclaim against the folly of thinking that there could be any path towards advantage except through right doing.’ And again, ‘The whole is pervaded by a spirit of devoutness ; and if there is little discussion of God, it is plainly because the idea of God is so entirely taken for granted.’

#### FOURTH SUNDAY.

‘No great thing cometh suddenly into being, for not even a bunch of grapes can, or a fig. If you say to me now, “I desire a fig,” I answer that there is need of time ; let it first of all flower, and then bring forth the fruit, and then ripen. When the fruit of a fig-tree is not perfected at once, and in a single hour, would you win the fruit of a man’s mind thus quickly and easily ?’

—*Epictetus*.

READING. *Luke ii. 40-52.*

The child Jesus grew and waxed strong, becoming filled with wisdom : and the grace of God was upon him.

And his parents went every year to Jerusalem, at the feast of the Pass-



over. And when he was twelve years old, they went up after the custom of the feast; and when they had fulfilled the days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and his parents knew it not, but supposing him to be in the company, they went a day's journey; and they sought for him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance: and when they found him not, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking for him. And it came to pass after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions: and all that heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. And when they saw him they were astonished; and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I sought thee sorrowing.

And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be in my Father's house? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and he was subject unto them: and his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men.

NOTES.—Ver. 40. 'In spirit' in A.V.; omitted in R.V. and other translations. In A.V. and R.V., 'filled' only. Ver. 49 A.V. 'About my Father's business.' R.V. and others give 'in my Father's house.' Ver. 52. 'Stature,' or 'age,' as some translators have it.

This passage will form a good basis for a conversation on how to gain the wisdom of which we have been lately speaking. Make the scholars understand that the knowledge that they gain at school,—the subjects they have learnt there,—is the *food* which, properly digested, will lead to wisdom; but these subjects in themselves, are *not* wisdom. Unless food is put into the body we cannot be strong, but it is of no use unless it is digested and assimilated when, being carried along as blood, it nurtures the wasted tissues. Children—and children, too, of larger growth—are apt to think that because they have learnt a certain number of facts at school, or elsewhere, that they are wiser than their parents and friends who have not received their advantages of gaining knowledge; and this lesson is therefore an important one. Jesus, we are told, both *heard and asked questions*, listened with intelligence, was not content with merely taking in so much knowledge in parrot fashion. And what did it all lead to? Not to self importance, at having been distinguished by the notice of learned men, for on his return home he was still obedient—'subject'—to his parents. So he *increased* in wisdom; faithful in a few things he grew to be faithful unto many things, and his increase of wisdom led him to be 'subject' to the voice of his Heavenly Father speaking in his heart throughout his whole life.

## JUNE.

### Be Loving.

'Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and everyone who loveth is begotten of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love.'—1 John iv. 7, 8.

### FIRST SUNDAY.

READING. —1 *Corinthians* xiii.

SETTING.—Paul is writing to the people of the church at Corinth, where there has been wrangling as to who was worthy of the greatest honour.

Having acknowledged that each one had a different gift, he showed them, by a comparison with the various parts of the human body, that the welfare of the whole depended on the proper recognition of all the members, whether their powers were greater or smaller. 'If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it,' God has given different gifts to each; let everyone use them in his service; but the greatest blessing of all is one after which all must strive. 'But desire earnestly the greater gifts,' writes he, and then he proceeds to tell of the 'more excellent way.'

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And although I have prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. And though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing.

Love is patient, is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, behaveth not unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth in truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth; but whether there be prophesying, they will be done away; whether languages, they will cease; whether knowledge, it will be done away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part will be done away.

When I was a child I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see in a glass darkly; but then face to face. Now I know in part; but then I shall know even as I am known.

But now abideth faith, hope, and love, these three; and the greatest of these is Love.

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NOTES.—'Charity' in A.V. has come to have such a limited meaning that it no longer fitly represents the quality of which Paul is speaking; hence the R.V. translates the word by 'Love.'

This passage leads naturally to a chat over what we give—whether service, or money, or gifts, either small or great.

'Give with a good will,  
Or give not at all,'

is a homely saying but a good one. It is a privilege to be allowed to help another, and we have no right to accept it unless it is a fitting expression of the loving spirit behind, or unless we are 'constrained by love.' Conceived aright, the pleasure of giving far exceeds the joy of receiving; indeed the latter is burdensome unless the gift comes as the fruit of Love.

## SECOND SUNDAY.

READING. From 'The Imitation of Christ.'

SETTING.—The book from which this reading is taken was written by a devout man who lived some 450 years ago. It is not known with certainty who wrote it, though it is usually ascribed to Thomas à Kempis, one born in humble life, but who spent most of his long life attached to a monastery. He is described as a most eloquent preacher, and we are told that his life was an example of piety, meekness, and industry. His heart was full of love

to God and Christ—the two being inseparable according to the teaching of his Church; and this passage on the divine helpfulness of Love is one of the most beautiful in the book.

Ah, Lord God, Thou holy lover of my soul, when Thou comest into my heart, all that is within me shall rejoice.

Set me free from evil passions that I may be fit to love, encouraged to suffer, steady to persevere.

Love is a great thing; yea, a great and thorough good; by itself it makes everything that is heavy, light: and it bears evenly all that is uneven. For it carries a burden which is no burden, and makes everything that is bitter, sweet.

Nothing is sweeter than love, nothing more courageous, nothing higher, nothing wider, nothing more pleasant, nothing fuller nor better in heaven and earth; because love is born of God, and cannot rest but in God, above all created things.

He that loveth, flieth, runneth and rejoiceth; he is free and is not bound.

He giveth all for all, and hath all in all; because he resteth in One High above all things, from whom all that is good flows and proceeds.

God respecteth not the gifts, but turneth Himself above all gifts to the giver.

Love is active, sincere, affectionate, pleasant and amiable; courageous, patient, faithful, prudent, long suffering, manly and never seeking itself.

For in whatever instance a person seeketh himself, there he falleth from love.

If any man love he knoweth what is the cry of this voice. For it is a loud cry in the ears of God, this ardent affection of the soul which saith, 'My God, my love, Thou art all mine, and I am all Thine.'

Remind the scholars of the difference between having to do things because they 'must,' and because they 'want' to do them. We all want to please those whom we love; so that if we love God we shall try to find what He wills so as to be able to carry out his wishes; if we love our neighbour we shall 'run' to do him service, and rejoice in any good fortune that may come to him. The one way to enable us to overcome the friction that results of our 'running against one another' in the path of life is to 'Love more, my child, love more!' Our reason will tell us that the burden of daily trifles must be borne, but a true *Love* will so strengthen us that we shall not feel them to be a burden. Try to make the scholars *feel* this; they probably will, if the teacher is filled himself with this glorious truth; and let him not be afraid of using the most homely illustrations which occur to him, if these emphasize this point.

### THIRD SUNDAY.

'Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren ye did it unto me.'—*Matt.* xxv. 40.

READING. From Lowell's 'Vision of Sir Launfal.'

SETTING.—In the last reading these words occurred, 'God respecteth not the gifts, but turneth himself above all gifts to the giver,' and in the week before we read the same thought in the words of the apostle Paul. In the 'Vision of Sir Launfal' we have an illustration of this thought, a vision which came to him as a dream in the night.

Sir Launfal desires to see the Vision of Christ, holding in his hands the holy cup from which he had drunk at the Last Supper.

So the rich knight, on a fine June morning, when all nature seems full of rejoicing, comes out in gay attire, on a beautiful horse, to set forth on his search. At his gate sits a beggar, a leper; and the sight—so out of harmony with the beauty of nature and the proud joy of his heart—jars upon him. We read:

As Sir Launfal made way through the  
darksome gate,

He was 'ware of a leper, crouched by  
the same,

Who begged with his hand and moaned  
as he sate;

And a loathing over Sir Launfal came;  
The sunshine went out of his soul with  
a thrill,

The flesh 'neath his armour 'gan  
shrink and crawl,

And midway it leap his heart stood still,  
Like a frozen waterfall;

For this man, so foul and bent of stature,  
Rasped harshly against his dainty  
nature,

And seemed the one blot on the sum-  
mer morn,—

So he tossed him a piece of gold in scorn.  
The leper raised not the gold from the  
dust:

'Better to me the poor man's crust,  
Better the blessing of the poor,  
Though I turn me empty from his  
door!

That is no true alms which the hand  
can hold;

He gives nothing but worthless gold

Who gives from a sense of duty;  
But he who gives a slender mite,

And gives to that which is out of sight,  
That thread of the all-sustaining Beauty  
Which runs through all and doth all  
unite,—

The hand cannot clasp the whole of  
his alms,

The heart outstretches its eager palms,  
For a God goes with it and makes it  
store

To the soul that was starving in dark-  
ness before.'

Unheeding, Sir Launfal goes on his way.  
Years pass and the Beauteous Vision still  
eludes his sight, though he searches for it  
through many lands. He returns once more  
to his home, poor and weak and weary.  
But his own trials and troubles have taught  
him to feel for the woes of others, and when  
he again finds the leper at his gate he no  
longer turns in scorn away, for he sees in  
him the image of the Master, and he cries,

'Mild Mary's Son, acknowledge me,  
Behold, through him, I give to thee.

And the story goes on:

Then the soul of the leper stood up in  
his eyes

And looked at Sir Launfal, and  
straightway he

Remembered in what a haughtier guise

He had flung an alms to leprosie,

When he girt his young life up in  
gilded mail,

And set forth in search of the Holy  
Grail.

The heart within him was ashes and dust;

He parted in twain his single crust,

He broke the ice on the streamlet's  
brink,

And gave the leper to eat and drink.

'Twas a mouldy crust of coarse brown  
bread,



'Twas water out of a wooden bowl,—  
Yet with fine wheaten bread was the  
leper fed,  
And 'twas red wine he drank with  
his thirsty soul.

As Sir Launfal mused with a down-  
cast face,

A light shone round about the place !  
The leper no longer crouched at his side,  
But stood before him glorified ;  
Shining, and tall, and fair, and straight  
As the pillar that stood by the Beautiful Gate,—

Himself the gate whereby men can  
Enter the temple of God in man.

His words were shed softer than leaves  
from the pine,  
And they fell on Sir Launfal as snows  
on the brine,  
Which mingle their softness and quiet  
in one

With the shaggy unrest they float  
down upon ;  
And the voice that was calmer than  
silence said,

'Lo, it is I, be not afraid !  
In many climes, without avail,  
Thou hast spent thy life for the Holy  
Grail ;

Behold it is here,—this cup which thou  
Did'st fill at the streamlet for me but  
now ;

This crust is my body broken for thee,  
This water his blood that died on the  
tree :

The holy supper is kept, indeed,  
In whatso we share with another's  
need ;

Not what we give, but what we  
share,—

For the gift without the giver is bare.  
Who gives himself with his alms feeds  
three,—

Himself, his hungering neighbour, and  
Me.

NOTES.—The class may read *Matt.* xxv. 31-46, which contains a beautiful truth, if only it is taken as a parable or allegory, instead as bald statement of fact, as unfortunately it is sometimes regarded. In parables or allegories it is right to discriminate between the lesson which the speaker wants to emphasize, and the florid setting with which the imagination is to be caught, as it were. Very grave misunderstandings of the most sublime truths frequently result from the confusing the vital principle with its pictorial surroundings, more especially when the story has been told years ago, to a people with wholly different characteristics and surroundings from our own.

#### FOURTH SUNDAY.

'If on our daily course our mind  
Be set to hallow all we find,  
New treasures still, of countless price,  
God will provide for sacrifice.

'The trivial round, the common task,  
Will furnish all we need to ask ;  
Room to deny ourselves, a road  
To bring us daily nearer God.'

—*J. Keble.*

#### READING. *Romans* xii.

SETTING.—The Apostle Paul is writing a letter to the Jewish Christians in Rome. In the first part of this letter he speaks of their special Jewish laws and observances, insisting that the Gentiles also can be equally true followers of Christ. Then he passes on to the real proofs of the true spirit ; not sacrifices of beasts and birds,

killed as offerings to God, but our living selves; this is the spiritual worship required. A spirit of kindness and love to others, a constant industry in all good things, these are signs of a real renewing of the mind!

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is spiritual worship. And be not fashioned according to this age: but be ye transformed, by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

For I say, through the grace given me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith. For even as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office: so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another. And having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of our faith; or ministry, let us give ourselves to our ministry; or he that teacheth, to his teaching; or he that exhorteth, to his exhorting: he that giveth, let him do it with liberality; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. In love of the

brethren be tenderly affectioned one to another, in honour preferring one another; in diligence not slothful; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing steadfastly in prayer; communicating to the necessities of the saints; given to hospitality.

Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not.

Rejoice with them that rejoice; weep with them that weep. Be in sympathy one with another.

Set not your mind on high things, but condescend to things that are lowly.

Be not wise in your own conceits.

Render to no man evil for evil.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

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NOTES.—There are some differences in ver. 1, mainly taken from the marginal notes of R.V.; these make the meaning more clear.—vv. 4-8 takes up the comparison between members of the Church and members of the body, given more fully in 1 Cor. xii. ver. 7. *Ministry*, i.e. service; referring to the duties of the deacons, the looking after the necessities of the people. Ver. 13, *Saints*; in those days the term applied specially to members of the same religious community.

Ver. 16, *The same mind*, A.V.; *High things*; i.e. things accounted high by the world.

A few verses of the chapter have been omitted, partly because they did not seem necessary in this connection, and partly because their meaning is not easily grasped. If taken in the reading, attention should be called to the fact that Paul in vv. 19-20, was referring to a well known passage (*Deut.* xxxii. 35), and that his meaning was simply that man should

not be animated by a revengeful spirit; God will make it clear that a man cannot sin with impunity. The spirit of love cannot abide in us when that of revenge fills our heart.

#### FIFTH SUNDAY.

READING. *John xv. 8-17.*

SETTING.—This Gospel was written long after the death of Jesus, but in it we have many evidences of the great stress he must have laid upon the power of Love, for the remembrance of this part of his teaching is the mainspring of this book. Let us listen to these words and take them into our hearts.

Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

Even as the Father hath loved me, I also have loved you; abide ye in my love.

If ye keep my commandments ye will abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

This is my commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, than to lay down his life for his friends.

Ye are my friends, if ye do the things which I command you. No longer do I call you servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard from my Father I have made known unto you.

Ye did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye may ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

These things, I command you, that ye love one another.

NOTE.—In the days of the Roman Empire it was the custom of the emperor, on his accession, to choose from among his followers a certain number of special friends, with whom he discussed matters more freely. Possibly the writer referred to this custom in the second half of this passage.

With this lesson ends the second section of three months, or it may be that the six months' course has been gone through. The teacher should, therefore, devote this lesson to taking up the questions in his note-book, recalling the passages read, and leading his scholars to say with Rabbi ben Ezra, in Robert Browning's poem,

'I who saw power, see now love perfect, too;  
Perfect I call Thy plan.  
Thanks that I am a Man!  
Maker! re-make, complete,—I trust what  
Thou shalt do.'

#### INTERLUDE.

During the past six months we have been considering the first of the two Great Commandments, and have tried to realise the worthiness of Him, in whom we live, and move, and have our being. Until we have done this we cannot love Him with all our soul and all our strength.

'He must be truer than the truest friend,  
He must be tenderer than a woman's love,  
A father better than the best of sires;  
Kinder than she who bore us.'<sup>1</sup>

BUT, when we have realised that our Heavenly Father is this, then we must love Him, for 'we needs must love the highest when we see it'; then we shall revere his holy name and trust Him; then we shall try to make ourselves like unto Him.

This brings us to Religion; and at this point we shall do well to read the *Recollections of Address by the Rev. J. J. Wright* (see p. 120), in which he teaches that **God is spirit, man is spirit**; and that **Religion is that which binds spirit to spirit.**

### Third Section.

#### JULY.

##### Our Duties to Ourselves.

'Pursue as Reason bids. And if as Reason bids, then, when thou hast aught of good in thee, thy pursuit shall be well.' 'Nay,' say ye, 'but we would live as Sages, and do good to men.'

'What good? What wilt thou do? Hast thou done good to thyself? Thou wouldst do them good?—then do not chatter to them, but show them in thyself what manner of man a love of wisdom can make.'

—*Epictetus.*

#### FIRST SUNDAY.

##### SELF-REVERENCE.

READING. *Psalm viii., 1 Cor. iii. 16, 1 John iii. 2, 3.*

SETTING.—When we open our eyes and look at the wonderful works of God we may well say with the old Hebrew poet, 'Behold,

<sup>1</sup> 'Wind Clouds and Star Drifts,' O. W. Holmes.

they are very good,' but among them are not the mind and soul of man the most marvellous of all? Listen to the ancient Hebrew song of praise:—

O Lord, our Lord,  
How excellent is thy name in all the earth!  
Whose majesty reacheth up to the heavens.

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou established strength,  
Because of thine adversaries,  
That thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,  
The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;  
What is man, that thou art mindful of him?  
And the son of man, that thou visitest him?

For thou hast made him but little lower than the gods,

And crownest him with glory and honour.

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands;

Thou hast put all things under his feet:  
All sheep and oxen,

Yea and the beasts of the field;

The fowl of the air and the fish of the sea,  
and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea.

O Lord, our Lord,  
How excellent is thy name in all the earth!

So sang the old Psalmist. Again, the Apostle Paul wrote:—



'Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man destroy the temple of God, him shall God destroy: for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.'

And John, having learned from Jesus how blessed an influence for good is the sense of kinship to God, writes:—

'Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet manifest what we shall be. But we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every one that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself even as He is pure.'

NOTES.—Point out to the class how important it is to realise our 'high calling,' to reverence the wonderful powers that have been given into our keeping; how the thought of our kinship with God should make us strive to be worthy children of Him, whose 'last, best name is Love.'

'Give a dog a bad name and you may hang him,' says the old adage; an illustration of this will not be difficult to find; then dwell on the reverse. 'Nobility demands nobility'; how the desire to keep up the honour of a family may help the wandering son to be brave and true.

Show the difference between a conceited idea of our own powers and a reverent admiration for the possibilities of our nature. Unless we believe that we *can* attain a higher point we shall not strive.

For senior classes, 'The Story of Richard Doubledick,' told in Charles Dickens' Christmas Number of 'The Seven Poor Travelers,' would form an excellent illustration of this lesson.

And secondly, point out that we cannot help others effectually until we have trained ourselves,—see heading from Epictetus at beginning of this section.

## SECOND SUNDAY.

### SELF-RESTRAINT.

He whose spirit is without restraint  
Is like a city that is broken down and hath  
no wall.—*Prov. xxv. 28.*

READING. *James iii. 2-12.*

SETTING.—This letter or epistle of James contains good practical advice. He is evidently rather tired of hearing people saying, 'Lord, Lord,' and yet not doing the Lord's will; and he tells them plainly that words without deeds are worthless. Then he bids them beware how their unruly tongue leads them astray; they must learn to restrain it.

Behold we put the horses' bridles into their mouths, that they may obey us; we turn about their whole body also.

Behold the ships also, though they are so great, and are driven by rough winds, are yet turned about by a very small rudder, whithersoever the steersman willet.

So the tongue also is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold how much wood is kindled by a little fire. And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body. For every kind of beasts and birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed by mankind: but the tongue can no man tame; it is a restless evil, it is full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we the Lord and Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the likeness of God: out of the same mouth cometh forth blessing and cursing.

My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth the fountain send forth

from the same opening sweet water and bitter? Can a fig-tree, my brethren, yield olives, or a vine, figs? neither can salt water yield sweet.

NOTE.—Ver. 6; as the meaning of part of this verse is rather obscure, it has been omitted. The following proverbs may be suggestive:—

‘Death and life are in the power of the tongue’ (*Prov. xviii. 21*).

‘A gentle tongue is a tree of life;

But perverseness therein wounds the spirit’ (*Prov. xv. 4*).

‘When a word has been uttered,  
It straightway becometh thy master;  
While it unspoken remains  
Thou art the master of it.’

—*Arab Proverb.*

Let the teacher lead from ‘restraining of the tongue’ to the restraining of the passions which lie behind it. Readers of ‘Little Dorrit’ will remember how Tattycoram was counselled to count twenty-four before speaking, when roused into passion.

Reference to the story of Samson may be made, who suffered because of his lack of self-restraint, so far as his tongue was concerned. He was a Nazirite, it is true, and as such (*Num. vi. 2-5*) had not tasted strong drinks; but it is not enough to restrain ourselves in one direction only.

‘What boots it at one gate to make defence,  
And at another to let in the foe?’

sighs Samson, in his self-humiliation (Milton’s ‘Samson Agonistes’).

In the opening chapters of the mystic Book of Revelation many things are promised ‘to him who overcometh’; and indeed it is only when we have learned to govern ourselves that we can give wise help to others, and so take up our privilege of being co-workers with God.

The teacher will find the Rev. C. Roper’s address (p. 5) helpful in this lesson, if teaching a class of lads.

### THIRD SUNDAY.

#### SELF-CONTROL.

READING. *Daniel i. 3-6 and 8-20.*

SETTING.—Evil times have fallen on the Jewish nation. It had been carried into captivity, and after some seventy years the people had received permission to return to Jerusalem. Five hundred years have passed since then, when the Syrian king, who has command over the country, tries to overthrow their worship of Jahveh, even defiling their Temple by driving swine into the Holy of Holies.

The nobler among the Jews strove to stir their comrades to resist the tyrant, and the Book of Daniel was probably written with this end in view. It would not do to write openly of resisting the king, but under the name of one of their former heroes at the time of the great captivity, the writer was able to stir up his countrymen to a steadfast resistance to this oppression of themselves and insult to their God.

And the king spake to Ashpenaz the chief of his chamberlains, that he should bring some of the children of Israel, even of the king’s seed, and of the nobles; children in whom no blemish, but of good countenance, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king’s palace, and that he should teach them the writing and the tongue of the Chaldeans.

And the king appointed to them a daily provision of the king’s delicacies, and of the wine which he drank; so nourishing them for three years, that at the end thereof they might stand before the king. Now among these were some of the children of Judah,

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the prince of the chamberlains that he might not defile himself. Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the chamberlains.

And the prince of the chamberlains said unto Daniel, 'I fear my lord the king, who hath appointed your food and your drink; for why should he see your faces worse looking than the children which are of your age? then shall ye endanger my head to the king.' Then Daniel said to the steward, whom the prince of the chamberlains had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, 'Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, for ten days; and let them give us some pulse to eat, and water to drink. Then let our countenances be looked upon before thee, and the countenances of the children that eat of the king's delicacies; and as thou seest, deal with thy servants.'

So he hearkened to them in this matter, and proved them for ten days. And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children that did eat the king's delicacies. Thus the steward took away their delicacies, and the wine that they should drink; and gave them pulse. As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all writing and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

And at the end of the days that the king had said he should bring them in, then the prince of the chamberlains brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king talked with them; and among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and soothsayers that were in all his kingdom.

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NOTES.—V. 12; *Pulse*, beans. It is noteworthy that the first good thing ascribed to Daniel was a proper self-control, a self-control which here takes the form of temperance in food. It is indeed the starting point of a good life to be strong enough to resist the temptations to undue pleasure on every side.

The best illustration of the value of a proper self-control may be found, I think, in the travels of Nansen, the Norwegian explorer in the Arctic Ocean.

The meaning of self-restraint and self-control are often confused. It seems to me that the former applies to keeping ourselves from giving way to evil passions, and to excesses generally. Self-control more properly belongs to the holding of each part of us in proper control so as to be ready to act wisely and promptly when occasion arises. Boys and girls who learn drilling will understand what control of body means; they will remember how, at first, they found it difficult for their limbs to obey their will quite instantaneously; but that gradually, their legs and arms learned to be 'under control,' and obey the word of command at the moment.

It is this we want to do with our true selves, our souls; and it, too, can only come

by practice. If we train ourselves to listen for the voice of command spoken by our conscience; and strive, each time we hear, also to obey its call, we shall gain that true self control which is the first essential of a noble life.

#### FOURTH SUNDAY.

##### SELF-CULTURE.

##### READING. *Proverbs* ii. 1-11.

Again we turn to one of the ancient exhortations to search diligently after wisdom. To seek the laws of God, to strive to understand his ways, these things are necessary for all those who desire to live according to his will.

My son, if thou wilt receive my words,  
And lay up my commandments with thee;  
So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom,  
And apply thine heart to understanding;  
Yea, if thou criest after knowledge,  
And liftest up thy voice for understanding;  
If thou seekest her as silver,  
And searchest for her as for hid treasures:

Then shalt thou understand the fear  
of the Lord,  
And find the knowledge of God.  
For the Lord giveth wisdom;  
Out of his mouth cometh knowledge  
and understanding;  
He layeth up sound wisdom for the  
upright,  
He is a shield to them that walk in  
integrity;  
He guards the paths of judgment,  
And preserves the way of his saints.

Then shalt thou understand righteousness  
and judgment,  
And equity, yea, every good path.  
For wisdom shall enter into thine heart,  
And knowledge shall be pleasant unto  
thy soul;  
Discretion shall watch over thee,  
And understanding shall keep thee.

NOTES.—Note the earnestness with which the teacher bids ‘his son’ seek for knowledge and wisdom. Science will teach us, History will teach us, every branch of study will teach us something of God’s methods if we bring to our study an eye to see, an ear to hear, and a heart to love. It will be of no real good if we are content to cram our minds with facts; the mental food must be digested before our minds and souls can be nourished. This simile of food may be brought forward; for in the day schools children now-a-days learn some of the laws of the body, so they will be quite able to follow the illustration.

Run through the points of the four lessons.

1. Let us believe that we can make our lives beautiful and true, for are we not the children of God?

2. Let us learn to restrain our passions, and keep our tongue from all evil.

3. Let us teach our bodies and souls to be under control of our conscience, to the divine voice within.

4. Let us cultivate our minds so that we may understand something, at least, of the laws of the Heavenly Father, for thus shall we gain light not only for our own guidance but also for our brother man whom we would wish to help.

‘Flower in the crannied wall,  
I pluck you out of the crannies;—  
Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,  
Little flower!—But if I could understand  
What you are, root and all, and all in all,  
I should know what God and man is.’

—Tennyson.



## Fourth Section.

### Our Duty to Others.

'This command have we from him, that he that loveth God love his brother also.'

—1 John iv. 21.

'That love for one, from which there doth not spring

Deep love for all, is but a worthless thing.'

—E. B. Browning.

### AUGUST.

#### OUR DUTY IN OUR HOME.

##### FIRST SUNDAY.

##### CONFORMITY TO RULE—OBEDIENCE.

READING. *Ephesians* vi. 1-10, 13.

SETTING.—The writer of this letter is anxious that those who call themselves followers of Christ should be good and true in their daily life. In this passage he speaks of life in the home, and urges parents and children, masters and servants, all to do their parts worthily and well.

Children obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; this is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And fathers, provoke not your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Servants, be obedient to your masters, according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that whatever good thing each man

doeth, whether bond or free, for that will he receive back from the Lord. And ye masters, do the same to them, forbearing threats, knowing that ye also have a master in heaven, and with him there is no respect of persons.

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Take up the whole armour of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day and, having done all, to stand.

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NOTES.—Try to make the scholars see that whenever we do not live all alone we *must* give in to one another; there must be 'conformity to rule' all round. Point out that father and mother both have to do this, as well as the rest of the household, if the home is to be a happy one. Father has to be up early to be ready for work; mother must do her household duties at the proper time; they will both often have to give up a pleasure here or undertake some disagreeable task there, for the good of the household. Give homely illustrations, for boys and girls seldom realise that it is not only they who have to live 'under the law.' Let each one 'look to the things of another,' and feel his and her share of responsibility in making the best of the home.

If the scholars are young people earning wages, emphasize the point that this duty still remains though they are 'paying for themselves'; they have no right, for example, to disarrange the household by lying in bed even when it happens that no outside duty calls them away. The work has to be done, and order is impossible, if each one only thinks of what he or she wants. I once heard a mother lament over the many little bits of cooking she had to do; 'Tom won't eat this, and Mary can't touch that,' and so on throughout her family of six young people who paid for their board; this payment wiping off, they evidently thought,

any obligation on their part to consider their mother or the general comfort of the home. And yet true religion demands our best efforts as much in these little daily matters as it does in the so-called more spiritual things of life. The following couplets from the Book of Proverbs may be suggestive to the teacher.

A wise son maketh a glad father;  
But a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.—*Prov. x. 1.*  
Even a child is known by his doings,  
Whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.—*Prov. xx. 11.*  
Better is a dry morsel and quietness therewith,  
Than a house full of feasting with strife.—*Prov. xvii. 1.*  
He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty;  
And he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh the city.—*Prov. xvi. 32.*  
A soft answer turneth away wrath;  
But a grievous word stirreth up anger.—*Prov. xv. 1.*

## SECOND SUNDAY.

ALL TO BRING OF THEIR BEST TO THE  
SERVICE OF THE HOME.

READINGS. *1 Cor. xii. 4-21, 26.*

PRELUDE.—In some of our former readings reference has been made to Paul's parable of The Body, wherein he reminds the early Christian Church of the interdependence of its members. The same parable applies equally well to the members of a household, and therefore it is that we choose it for our reading this month.

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit, and there are diversities of service, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of workings, but the same God, who worketh all things in all men. And to each one

is given the manifestation of the spirit so that he may profit withal.

For to one is given, by the spirit, the word of wisdom; and to another the word of knowledge, after the same spirit; to another faith, in the same spirit; and to another the gifts of healing, in the same spirit; and to another the doing of mighty works, and to another prophecy, and to another discerning of spirits; and to another divers kinds of languages, and to another the interpretation of languages. But in all these worketh one and the same spirit, dividing to each man severally as he will.

For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the one body, though many, are but one body; so also is Christ. For in one spirit we were all baptised into one body; whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one spirit.

For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot should say: 'Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body'; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, 'Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body'; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members each one of them in the body, even as it pleased him.

And if they were all one member, where was the body? But now they are many members, but one body.

The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of thee'; nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.'

And if one member suffer all the members suffer with it; or if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

NOTES.—There are a few changes made from various versions, but none calling for special remark. The whole chapter has not been given because the remainder would not refer to home life, and it is always well to resist the temptation to go away from the main object.

The last lesson referred more especially to 'being under the law' of the Home; this one passes on to the more active duties that we owe to it. Let each of us,—avoiding murmurings and disputings—bring of our best, whatever that best may be.

Go through the parable of the body carefully; it is so clear that all can understand it. Then let your scholars 'build up' an imaginary home; each one personating one of its inmates and saying what he or she can do to make the home happy,—the rest listening and adding any points that may strike them. This they will probably enjoy doing, and it would be an advantage if the teacher could make a summary of what is said, copy it out with a 'manifold writer' at home, and give each of his class a copy to keep of their Ideal Home, with the final word 'Go thou and do likewise.'

### THIRD SUNDAY.

#### APPRECIATION OF EACH OTHER'S WORK.

READING. *Proverbs xxxi.* 10-31.

'With good will, doing service.'—*Eph.* vi. 7.

SETTING.—At the end of the Book of Proverbs we have the following beautiful description of a good wife and mother. Who was the writer of it we do not know, but it

is very evident that it was one who had experienced the blessing of a happy, well-ordered home.

A virtuous woman who can find?  
Her price is far above rubies.

The heart of her husband trusteth in her,  
And he shall have no lack of gain.  
She doeth him good and not evil

All the days of her life.  
She seeketh wool and flax,  
And worketh willingly with her hands.  
She is like the merchant ships,  
She bringeth her food from afar.  
She riseth also while it is yet night,  
And giveth meat to her household,  
And their task to her maidens.

She considered a field and buyeth it:  
With the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.

She girdeth her loins with strength,  
And maketh strong her arms.  
She perceiveth that her merchandise is good:

Her lamp goeth not out by night.  
She layeth her hands on the distaff,  
And her hand holdeth the spindle.

She spreadeth out her open hand to the poor;

Yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.

She is not afraid of the snow, for her household;

For all her household are clothed in double garments.

She maketh for herself cushions of tapestry;

Her clothing is linen and fine purple.  
Her husband is known in the gates,

When he sitteth among the elders of  
the land.  
She maketh linen garments, and selleth  
them;  
And delivereth girdles unto the mer-  
chant.  
Strength and dignity are her clothing;  
And she laugheth at the time to come.  
She openeth her mouth with wisdom;  
And the law of Kindness is on her  
tongue.  
She looketh well to the ways of her  
household,  
And eateth not the bread of idleness.  
Her children rise up and call her blessed;  
Her husband also, and he praiseth her:  
'Many daughters have done virtuously,  
But thou excellest them all.'  
Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain;  
But a woman that feareth the Lord,  
she shall be praised.  
Give her of the fruit of her hands;  
And let her works praise her in the  
gates.

NOTES.—Ver. 15, 'giveth a task'; A.T.,  
*a portion*.

Ver. 21, 'double garments.' A.T., *scarlet*.

Ver. 22, 'cushions'—other translations,  
*carpet or covering*. 'Linen'; A.T., *Silk*.

Ver. 25, A.T., *shall rejoice in*. 'Shall  
laugh at' in R.V.; the good home-mother  
can afford to laugh at the cold and frost,  
knowing that she is prepared for all emer-  
gencies.

NOTES.—The first point that naturally  
suggests itself is the splendid example of  
womanhood here set forth. Industry, fore-  
thought for her household, help to the  
needy, these are some of her characteristics.

(Those who know 'From Anvil to Pulpit'  
will feel that Robert Collyer's mother  
might have taken this example as her ideal.)  
Wise in the administration of her house-  
hold, and with the law of kindness on her  
tongue, full of strength and dignity, this  
'mother in Israel' must indeed have been  
a worthy helpmate to her husband, he who  
was one 'among the elders of the land.' No  
wonder that he and his children 'rise up'  
to do honour to her name and that they  
bless her memory.

The next point. How pleasant to know  
that a loving eye has noted all that the good  
'home-maker' has done. A woman who  
had just read a beautiful book, looked at  
the author's name on the title page and  
exclaimed 'I would like to have been that  
man's mother.' A lad, whose mother had  
gone about an infected town nursing the  
sick during a terrible epidemic, until she  
herself fell a victim to the dreaded fever,  
heard a little group of people talking about  
her wonderful skill, patience, and love.  
They did not know who he was until,  
reverently lifting his cap, he said, 'She  
was my mother.' Ah! the deep joy of  
these moments, even when our hearts are  
bowed down with sorrow. And I can  
imagine that the writer of this passage, if  
asked, 'Where did you ever come across  
such a woman?' might have 'risen up'  
and said, 'She was my mother.'

But now, let us ask ourselves 'Do we  
appreciate the loving service that our home  
folks render for our sake?' Are we quick  
to note the efforts they make, ready to  
sympathize with the difficulties they have  
to meet, and rejoice with them when these  
are overcome? Or do we take it all as a  
matter of course, and their service as our  
just right? Let us not be backward in  
acknowledging—in blessing and in praising,  
as the old writer puts it,—the kindly actions  
of those who help to make our homes happy,  
remembering that there is no medicine so  
good for tired limbs or a weary spirit as  
that contained in a kind word, or look of  
loving appreciation and sympathy.



## FOURTH SUNDAY.

## MUTUAL FORBEARANCE.

'Forbearing one another and forgiving one another,'—*Col. iii. 13.*

READING. *Genesis xxxiii. 1-14.*

SETTING.—You all know the old story of Esau and Jacob, how Jacob deceived his father Isaac, and won from him the blessing intended for Esau. Jacob had to leave home for fear lest Esau should take revenge; and he lived for many years in a foreign land.

Time passed, and Jacob became a wealthy man. But the memory of his old homeland was dear to him, and he longed to go back. How would his brother receive him? Would he forgive? He determined to send messengers on in front to tell Esau that he was on his way. He did this, and he also sent by them rich gifts, in the hope that he might thus win his brother's friendship.

But Esau had outlived his anger, and had forgiven his brother. Let us read the account of their meeting.

And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids. And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindmost. And he himself passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother.

And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him; and they wept. And Esau lifted up his eyes and saw the women and the children; and said, 'Who are these with thee?' And Jacob said, 'The

children which God hath graciously given thy servant.' Then the handmaids came near, they, and their children, and they bowed themselves. And Leah also and her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near, and Rachel, and they bowed themselves.

And Esau said, 'What meanest thou by all this drove which I met?' And Jacob said, 'To find grace in the sight of my lord.' And Esau said, 'I have enough, my brother; let that thou hast be thine.' And Jacob said, 'Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight; then receive my present at my hand: forasmuch as I have seen thy face, as one seeth the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me. Take, I pray thee, my gift that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough. And he urged Esau, and Esau took it. And he said, 'Let us take our journey, and let us go, and I will go before thee.'

And Jacob said unto him, 'My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and that the flocks and herds with me give suck: and if they overdrive them one day, all the flocks will die. Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant; and I will lead on softly, according to the pace of the cattle that is before me and according to the pace of the children, until I come unto my lord unto Seir.

NOTES.—This is one of the few home stories that we find in the Hebrew Scriptures. Had Rebekah been like the good house-mother of whom we read last Sunday

her boys would have been better taught to control themselves, we feel sure, and so would not have had to suffer so much from evil passions. The story will suggest a chat on the necessity there is in a home for the spirit of forbearance and forgiveness. Let the scholars find examples. An old servant used to say, 'No home can be happy unless it is guarded by two bears,—Bear and Forbear.

#### FIFTH SUNDAY.

##### A CONTENTED, CHEERFUL SPIRIT.

READING. 'Tauler,' by J. G. Whittier.

SETTING.—Six hundred years ago there lived in Germany a great preacher and pure-minded teacher, Tauler by name, who spent half his life in study and the other half in helping the people to grow nobler and better men and women. From time to time Tauler grew discouraged when he saw how strong evil, and trouble, and sorrow were in the world; and in the following poem by the American poet, Whittier, we learn how he was helped to regain his courage and trust, by the words of a simple faithful soul.

Tauler, the preacher, walked one autumn day

Without the walls of Strasburg, by the Rhine,

Pondering the solemn Miracle of Life;  
And as he walked he prayed. Even the same

Old prayer with which, for half-a-score of years,

Morning, and noon, and evening, lip and heart

Had groaned: 'Have pity upon me, Lord!

Thou seest while teaching others, I am blind;

Send me a man who can direct my steps!'

Then as he mused, he heard along his path

A sound as of an old man's staff, among  
The dry, dead linden-leaves; and looking up,

He saw a stranger, weak, and poor, and old.

'Peace be unto thee, father!' Tauler said,

'God give thee a good day!' The old man raised

Slowly his calm blue eyes. 'I thank thee, son,

But *all* my days are good, and none are ill.'

Wondering thereat, the preacher spake again,

'God give thee happy life.' The old man smiled,

'I never am unhappy.'

Tauler laid

His hand upon the stranger's coarse gray sleeve:

'Tell me, O father, what thy strange words mean;

Surely man's days are evil, and his life  
Sad as the grave it leads to.' 'Nay, my son,

Our times are in God's hands, and all our days

Are as our needs: for shadow as for sun,

For cold as heat, for want as wealth, alike

Our thanks are due, since that is best which is;

And that which is not, sharing not his life,

Is evil only as devoid of good.

And for the happiness of which I spake,  
I find it in submission to His will,  
And calm trust in the holy Trinity  
Of Knowledge, Goodness and Almighty  
Power.'

Tears sprang in Tauler's eyes. A sudden light,  
Like the first ray which fell on chaos,  
clove  
Apart the shadow wherein he had  
walked  
Darkly at noon. And, as the strange  
old man  
Went his slow way, until his silver hair  
Set like the white moon where the hills  
of vine  
Slope to the Rhine, he bowed his head  
and said:  
'My prayer is answered. God hath  
sent the man  
Long sought, to teach me, by his simple  
trust,  
Wisdom the weary schoolmen never  
knew.'

NOTES.—The secret of a contented spirit is just that absolute trust which we find in this old man of whom we have just read. There is a sham, an ignoble content, which accepts everything in easy going fashion from a mere slothful habit. How can we tell the difference? By asking ourselves and answering the question, when evil comes upon us, Can I help this? can I conquer this? If we can, we are guilty of an ignoble content if we quietly bear what industry and energy might alter. But if it is an evil which is beyond our power to remedy, then it is our duty to accept our position, to be even content to suffer; never forgetting, however, that though we are not responsible for it, we are responsible for

our manner of bearing it. We shall usually find that when we brace ourselves aright to bear our burden, the weight of it is lessened to a wonderful degree.

Accepted in the right spirit, no 'outside evil' can harm us; nay more, we may so use our troubles that they may become our ministering angels. Refer to the old man's words 'For shadow and for sun, etc.'

And as we read on in Whittier's poem, we find that as the wise Tauler re-enters the city, he notes how the shadow of the great Minster's tower is thrown across the street by the noon-day sun, and in this he sees a parable of life, and cries that

'Darkness, in the pathway of man's life,  
Is but the shadow of God's providence,  
By the great Sun of wisdom cast thereon;  
And what is dark below is light in heaven.'

*Matt. vi. 16-23* may be read in the class. 'When ye fast'—from any good things of this life—'be not of a sad countenance.'

The spirit which is born of content, is that of always making the best of things, of turning the best side out even in the so-called little trifles of every day life. And this will lead to something more than contentment, it will give us a cheerful countenance, a merry heart; and 'a merry heart is a good medicine' as one old proverb has it (*Prov. xvii. 22*) and, in a home, we all know how differently everything goes when brightness and cheeriness are the fairies of the hearth.

'A cheerful spirit goes on quick  
A grumbler in the mud doth stick.'

If the teacher knows Martin Chuzzlewit, or Dickens' Christmas Books, he will find instances from Mark Tapley, and many other characters in the works of our great English prose poet, which well illustrate the beauty of a cheery spirit in the home.

The main points of this month's lesson on our duties in our home should be gone over before beginning the next sub-section.

## SEPTEMBER.

**Our Duty to Friends and Companions.**

## FIRST SUNDAY.

## FRIENDSHIP.

'Grief shared doth grief divide  
But joy that is shared is intensified.'

SETTING.—To-day we are to go to the traditions of the Western world for our reading; to the Great Teacher of the American Indians, the wise and mighty Hiawatha, he who, as Longfellow tells us in his beautiful poem, was ever striving to help his race. He it was who wrestled with the divine messenger and won for his people the bounteous gift of Indian corn; it was he, too, who taught them many things, not the least of which was that of picture writing, by means of which they could 'talk together' when absent.

One of the finest passages of the poem tells of Hiawatha and his friends. Listen to it.

Two good friends had Hiawatha,  
Singled out from all the others,  
Bound to him in closest union,  
And to whom he gave the right hand  
Of his heart, in joy and sorrow;  
Chibiābos, the musician,  
And the very strong man, Kwāsind.

Straight between them ran the path-  
way,  
Never grew the grass upon it;  
Singing birds, that utter falsehoods,  
Story-tellers, mischief-makers,  
Found no eager ear to listen,  
Could not breed ill-will between them;  
For they kept each other's counsel,  
Spake with naked hearts together,  
Pondering much, and much contriving  
How the tribes of men might prosper.

Most beloved by Hiawatha  
Was the gentle Chibiābos,  
He the best of all musicians,  
He the sweetest of all singers.  
Beautiful and childlike was he,  
Brave as man is, soft as woman,  
Pliant as a wand of willow,  
Stately as a deer with antlers.

When he sang, the village listened;  
All the warriors gathered round him,  
All the women came to hear him;  
Now he stirred their souls to passion,  
Now he melted them to pity.

All the many sounds of nature  
Borrowed sweetness from his singing,  
All the hearts of men were softened  
By the pathos of his music;  
For he sang of peace and freedom,  
Sang of beauty, love, and longing;  
Sang of death, and life undying  
In the islands of the blessed,  
In the Kingdom of Ponemah,  
In the land of the Hereafter.

Very dear to Hiawatha  
Was the gentle Chibiābos,  
He the best of all musicians,  
He the sweetest of all singers;  
For his gentleness he loved him,  
And the magic of his singing.

Dear too unto Hiawatha  
Was the very strong man Kwāsind,  
He the strongest of all mortals,  
He the mightiest among many;  
For his very strength he loved him,  
For his strength allied to goodness.  
And these two, as I have told you,  
Were the friends of Hiawatha,  
Chibiābos, the musician,  
And the very strong man Kwāsind.  
Long they lived in peace together,



Spake with naked hearts together,  
Pondering much and much contriving  
How the tribes of men might prosper.

It is good for us all to have a friend, but we must be careful to choose one of the right sort, for the saying is true 'Show me a man's friend, and I will tell you what he is like.' Having found a good friend, how are we to keep him? Read again carefully with the scholars the above passage, dwelling on each clause and its inner meaning. 'Giving his *right* hand in joy and sorrow;' the pathway was *straight* between them, with no grass growing from want of use. The proverbial little bird who tells tales 'found no eager ear to listen'—mischief makers 'could not breed ill will between them.'<sup>1</sup> They 'spake with naked hearts together'; would it be possible to find a more beautiful description of true friendship? And not for foolish gossip, nor for selfish pleasure did these friends take counsel, but for that of

'Pondering much and much contriving  
How the tribes of men might prosper.'

These may well form the basis of a practical chat with the class.

The teacher may refer here to the reading taken on page 61, where Jesus speaks to his disciples as his *friends*.

The love of David and Jonathan, 'passing the love of women,' is an excellent illustration of friendship, and the Song of the Bow, David's lamentation at the death of his friend and of Saul, his friend's father, may be read in the class if the revised version is at hand; the sense is so much better understood from that than from the A.T.; 2 *Sam.* i. 17-27. Of course the teacher will first give some account of the friends, perhaps the most telling illustration would be the story told in 1 *Sam.* xx.

<sup>1</sup> See *Prov.* xxvi. 20. When there is no wood the fire goeth out; so where there is no tale-bearer the strife ceaseth.

## SECOND SUNDAY.

### KINDNESS AND LOVING SERVICE.

READING. *Ruth* ii. 2-17.

SETTING.—In the book of *Ruth* we have a most touching story told about two of the ancestors of that king David, whose memory was held in such fond remembrance by the Jewish nation.

There was famine in the land of Judah, and, as there was no food, some of the inhabitants went to settle in the countries round about. Among these were a certain man and his wife, Elimelech and Naomi; they took their two sons and went into the country of Moab. Here they lived for some years; then Elimelech died and the two sons married Orpah and Ruth, women of the land of Moab. Afterwards the two sons died also; so that Naomi and her two daughters-in-law were left widows. Naomi felt sad away from her people, and she decided to return to Judah. Orpah and Ruth offered to go with the dear old mother, but she dissuaded them, for she knew how lonely it felt to be in a foreign land. Orpah therefore, having kissed Naomi tenderly, returned home; but Ruth would not let her go her weary way alone, but insisted on accompanying her. So the two women arrived at Bethlehem in Judæa; and it was at the beginning of the barley harvest.

And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, 'Let me now go into the fields and glean among the ears of corn after someone in whose sight I shall find grace.' And Naomi said unto her, 'Go, my daughter.' And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers. And she happened to light on the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech.

And, behold, Boaz came from Beth-

lehem, and said unto the reapers, 'The Lord be with you.' And they answered him, 'The Lord bless thee.'

Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, 'Whose damsel is this?' And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, 'It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab: and she said, 'Let me glean, I pray you, and gather after the reapers among the sheaves.' So she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, save when she tarried a little in the house.'

Then said Boaz unto Ruth, 'Hearst thou, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither pass from thence, but abide here fast by my maidens. Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: I have charged the young men that they shall not touch thee; and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn.'

Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, 'Why have I found grace in thy sight, that thou shouldst take knowledge of me, seeing I am a foreigner?' And Boaz answered and said unto her, 'It hath fully been shown me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore. The

Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to take refuge.'

Then she said, 'Let me find grace in thy sight, my lord; for thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken kindly unto thine handmaid, though I be not as one of thine handmaidens.'

And at meal-time Boaz said unto her, 'Come hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar.' And she sat beside the reapers: and they reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and had enough and more than enough.

And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, 'Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not. And let fall also some of the handful on purpose for her and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not.'

So she gleaned in the field until even; and she beat out that she had gleaned, and it was about a bushel of barley.

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NOTES.—There are some few variations from the O.T. and R.V. here (vv. 2, 3, 14, 16,) where Sharpe's translation seems to make the sense more complete.

The teacher might finish the story in his own words; telling how on her return home, when Ruth told Naomi what had happened, Naomi recognised in Boaz a near kinsman of her husband's. Now it was a Jewish law that when a man died, his land went to his nearest of kin provided this one was willing to marry the widow;

and then, if they had sons, these would possess the land of the first husband. If this condition was not accepted the offer of the land and the widow went to the next nearest relation. Naomi told Ruth to continue to glean in the same field until the end of the harvest, and Ruth gladly obeyed. The friendly feeling between Boaz and Ruth continued, and when he came to know that he was nearest but one of the relatives of Elimelech, he summoned that one before the elders and asked if he were ready to fulfil his part. The offer was declined, for the man already had a wife, and so Boaz took Ruth and the land of Elimelech, according to the law. And they had a son, named Obed, and his son was Jesse, the father of David.

Note the graciousness of the ancient law *Lev. xix. 9.* and *Deut. xxiv. 19.* remembering the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, in the days of plenty.

If the picture of the Virtuous or, as some translators have it, the Worthy Woman *Prov. xxxi.*, that we read last month, is an ideal of womanhood, that of Boaz may be taken as the type of an ideal man; yes, in very truth, a gentleman. The kindly salutation to his reapers, and their reply, how pleasantly it reads! The Ideal Mother 'looketh well to the ways of her household.' Boaz the rich landowner 'looked well' to the ways of his work people; going about here and there, noting everything that is worthy of note. So it is that he sees among the well known faces one that is strange to him, the features are those of a foreigner; what doeth she in his fields? And Boaz, when he has heard her story, doth as did the Virtuous Woman; he 'stretcheth forth his hand to the poor: yea, he reacheth out both hands to the needy,' and 'in his tongue is the law of kindness.'

In reading round this portion, many verses will illustrate this spirit of graciousness, that leads to these trifling acts of kindness which make up so much of the sweetness of life.

### THIRD SUNDAY.

BE GENEROUS, AND OPPRESS NOT.

READING. *Nehemiah v. 1-13.*

SETTING. When the king of Persia gave permission to the Jews to return to their own country after that time of the captivity, to which reference has been made in former readings, a certain number remained behind, having become accustomed to the new country and having found employment there.

Among these was Nehemiah, one of the nobles of his race, and he was cupbearer to the king who now reigned. To him came sad news of the disasters which had befallen the Jews on their return to Jerusalem. These tidings so grieved Nehemiah that he begged permission of the king to be allowed to go to his people, a request which was generously granted. In a future reading we shall see how wisely and well Nehemiah fortified the city against the surrounding enemies; to-day we are to see how he taught his people that they must be kind to each other, and generous to the needy. It had been a time of great scarcity of food, and some of the richer Jews had presumed on the necessities of their poorer brethren, and had enriched themselves at their expense.

And there was a great cry of the people and of their wives against their brethren the Jews. For there were some that said, 'We, our sons, and our daughters, are many; therefore let us get corn for them, that we may eat, and live.' Some also there were that said, 'We have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houses, that we may get corn, because of the dearth.' There were also that said, 'We have borrowed money for the King's tribute, upon our lands and vineyards; and now our

flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children: lo, we bring into bondage our sons, and our daughters to be servants. And some of our daughters are brought unto bondage already: neither is it in our power to redeem them; for other men have our lands and vineyards.'

And I, Nehemiah, was very angry when I heard their cry, and these words. Then I considered within myself, and I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and said unto them, 'Ye exact usury, every one of his brother.'

And I appointed a great assembly concerning them. And I said unto them, 'We, after our ability have redeemed our brethren the Jews, who were sold unto the heathen; and will ye even sell your brethren? or shall they be sold unto us?' Then they held their peace, and found no answer. I also said, 'That which ye do is not good: ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God lest we be shamed in the sight of the heathen our enemies? I likewise, and my brethren, and my servants have lent them money and corn. I pray you, let us leave off this usury. Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their olive-yards, and their houses; also the interest of money, and corn, wine and oil, which ye exact of them.' Then said they, 'We will restore them, and will require nothing of them; so will we do as thou sayest.'

Then I called the priests, and made them take an oath to do according to this promise. I also shook my lap, and

said, 'So may God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus may he be shaken out and emptied.' And all the congregation said 'Amen,' and praised Jahveh. And the people did according to this promise.

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NOTES.—This reading will afford a capital illustration of the power for good one may gain over others when he has shown by his conduct that he has sympathy for them and really desires their best welfare.

Speak of the meanness which tempts us to take advantage of the necessities of others: Jacob driving his bargain with Esau, when he came in hungry, before he let him have food, is another illustration; and we can find many of these in daily life even to-day, unfortunately. 'Hit him hard, he has no friends,' is not an untrue representation of the spirit of some boys and girls, and—the pity of some it!—of men and women, too.

Nehemiah gave as one of the reasons for their turning from their unkind action, that it will bring dishonour to their God among the heathen. There is a thought for us here; if we are the children of God, must we not strive to be worthy of our high calling? Jesus said 'Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify (not *yourselves*, mark that!) your Father who is in heaven.'

#### FOURTH SUNDAY.

CEREMONIES AND LIT SERVICE NO SUBSTITUTE FOR GOOD DEEDS.

READINGS. *Isaiah* i. 10-12 and 15-17; *Matt.* vii. 1-5 and 21-23.

SETTING.—Jesus once referred with indignation to a custom observed by some of the Jews, whereby they used to avoid the law which commanded children to support



their parents, by paying a certain sum into the Treasury—for God's service, as it was considered (*Mark* vii. 9-13). Then the undutiful sons said, 'What you would have had from me, is Corban'—a holy gift; and after that they held that they were freed from further obligation to father and mother. This observance of outward ceremony or mere lip service is one which is a temptation to many people now as it was then. Let us read to-day, a few words from Isaiah, when the Jewish nation was in a corrupt state, though careful of outward observances; and also some of the sayings of Jesus with respect to our duty to those around us, as a true expression of our attitude towards God. Isaiah said:—

Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to profane my courts?

And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from mine eyes; cease to do evil: learn to do well; seek just judgment; relieve the oppressed; do justice to the fatherless, plead for the widow.

And Jesus taught, saying:

Judge not that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye

shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me cast out the mote out of thine eye; and lo, the beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly, to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

Not everyone that saith to me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day; Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out demons? and in thy name have done many wonderful things? Then will I answer and say unto them, I never knew you; depart from me ye that work iniquity.

DEEDS, not WORDS, is the burden of this lesson. The passage from *Mark* may be looked up and read, for it will give the opportunity of emphasising that no honourable man will shirk his duty. Point out that 'getting out' of home duties, shirking them, is not excused by our saying, 'But I had to go to church, the time I could devote to you, mother, I gave to God instead.' The Heavenly Father will not accept such offerings in this sacred Treasury; the sacrifices of God are loving deeds of kindness shown to 'our brethren in the Lord.'

Ver. 10. *Sodom, Gomorrah.* The names of these cities had long been used as symbols of wicked places (see *Gen.* xix., xx.) and are used here in this way.

## OCTOBER.

## Our Duty to our Country.

'Breathes there the man with soul so dead  
 Who never to himself hath said,  
 'This is my own—my native land !'  
 Whose heart hath ne'er within him burned  
 As home his footsteps he hath turned  
 From wandering on a foreign strand ?  
 If such there breathe—go, mark him well !  
 For him no minstrel raptures swell ;  
 High though his titles, proud his name,  
 Boundless his wealth as wish can claim,  
 Despite those titles, power, and pelf,  
 The wretch concentred all in self ;—  
 Living, shall forfeit fair renown,  
 And, doubly dying, shall go down  
 To the vile dust from whence he sprung,  
 Unwept, unhonoured, and unsung.'

—Walter Scott.

## FIRST SUNDAY.

## TAKING OUR SHARE OF SERVICE.

READING. *Nehemiah* iv. 1-3, 6-23.

SETTING.—Last month (page 77) we read something of what Nehemiah did for the Jews after they had returned from captivity. He was Royal cup bearer to the great Persian king, but he asked and received permission to go to Jerusalem to help his poor countrymen.

In early times cities had to have strong walls built all round them, with gates here and there, which could be locked at night or in times of danger ; otherwise the people would be liable to suffer from sudden attacks of their enemies. Now the walls around Jerusalem were in ruins, and the gates were destroyed. This Nehemiah heard before he arrived ; so the first night he rode round the city by himself, and without telling anyone, so that he might find out exactly how matters were. The next day he called all the people together and told them that the walls and the gates must be repaired. They willingly consented, saying " Let us rise up and build." So they strengthened their hands for the

good work.' And each head of a family or clan undertook one portion of the work, the Sheep Gate, the Fish Gate, the Old Gate, the Valley Gate, and the Fountain Gate, each gate was allotted to one or other, and the walls between were divided out in the same way. And everyone did his part. Then Nehemiah writes :—

But it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we were building the wall, he was wroth, and greatly vexed, and mocked the Jews. And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, 'What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they now make an end? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish which are burned?' Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, 'Even that which they build, if a fox go up he shall break down their stone wall.'

But we built the wall ; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof ; *for the people had a mind to work.* But it came to pass, that when Sanballat, and Tobiah and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were being restored, and that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth, and conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it. Nevertheless we made our prayer unto God, and set a guard against the enemy day and night, because of them.

Then Judah said, 'The strength of the bearers of burdens faileth, and

there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.' And our adversaries said, 'They shall not know, neither see, till we come into the midst among them, and slay them, and cause the work to cease.' And it came to pass, that when the Jews who dwelt by them came, and told this unto us ten times, from all places, 'Ye must return'; then in the lower places behind the wall, and on the higher places, I set the people after their families with their swords, their spears, and their bows. And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, 'Be not ye afraid of them; remember the Lord, the great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.'

And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known to us, and that God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work. And it came to pass from that time forth, that the half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the corslets; and the chief men were behind all the house of Judah. They that built on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, each with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.

For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, as he built; and he that sounded the trumpet was

by me. And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, 'The work is great and large, and we are separated upon the wall, one far from another; in what place ye hear the sound of the trumpet, resort ye thither unto us: our God shall fight for us.'

So we laboured in the work; and half of them held the spears, from the rising of the morning till the stars came forth. Likewise at the same time I said unto the people, 'Let every one with his servant lodge within Jerusalem, that in the night they may be a guard to us, and work by day.' So neither I, nor my brethren, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard which followed me, none of us put off our clothes; every one went with his weapon even for water.

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NOTES.—The teacher should read through the first four chapters of Nehemiah before going to his class, so that he may have the full picture of the incidents in his mind. Stress may be laid—when the time for the application of the story comes—to v. 6, 'For the people had a mind to work,' and v. 17, which refers to working and being prepared for danger at the same time, the latter being an excellent parable for daily life.

This reading will illustrate how each one should be ready to work for one's country. Explain how gradually personal labour was exchanged for an equivalent in money; that taxation, in its right application, is simply another form of contributed service. Instead of each man lighting the bit of road in front of his house we co-operate, and all help to pay for it. The same holds good with taking care of one's property—police-men are paid by us all. Of course many examples may be given of this.

## SECOND SUNDAY.

DOING OUR VERY BEST.

READING. *Matthew xxv. 14-29.*

SETTING.—Jesus here tells his disciples a story that has been a favourite one ever since he told it; he wants to show them how they are to prepare themselves for the Kingdom of God; and he teaches them that it is their part to bring of their best to the work of God's world, no matter whether that best is much or little.

A man going into another country, called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one; to each according to his several ability; and he went on his journey.

Straightway he that received the five talents went and traded with them, and made other five talents. In like manner he also that received the two gained other two. But he that received the one went away and digged in the earth and hid his lord's money.

Now after a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and maketh a reckoning with them. And he that received the five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, 'Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: lo, I have gained other five talents.' His lord said unto him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.'

And he also that received the two talents came and said, 'Lord, thou de-

liveredst unto me two talents: lo, I have gained other two talents.' His lord said unto him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.'

And he also that had received the one talent came, and he said, 'Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou didst not sow, and gathering where thou didst not scatter: and I was afraid, and went away and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, thou hast thine own.' But his lord answered and said unto him, 'Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou *knewest* that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I did not scatter? Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the bankers, and at my coming I should have received back mine own with interest. Take ye away, therefore, the talent from him, and give it unto him that hath the ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away.'

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NOTES.—Make it very clear that the answer to the slothful servant 'thou *knewest* that I reap, etc.,' is uttered in scorn, and meant 'If you felt so sure in your mind that I reaped, etc.' Note that the same commendation was given to the one who had gained the two talents as to the one who had gained five. As with the Kingdom of God so with our own country. The point is that whether we have one talent, or ten, we are to do *our best* with what we have; that is all that can be asked



of us, but less than that we should be ashamed to give to our country's service.

Our country demands the best service we can give, then; obedience to its laws, fulfilment of its needs so far as we can give our help. Even the matter of personal cleanliness is a thing which concerns national wellbeing; all laws which make for good health are to be strictly observed if we are to keep disease from our fellow-countrymen.

### THIRD SUNDAY.

#### HELPING OUR COUNTRY.

READING. *1st Maccabees*, from chapters ii. and iii.

SETTING.—(Refer to setting of Reading from Daniel, p. 64). The King Antiochus, of Syria, cruelly oppressed the Jews, about 160 B.C., and strove to force them to forsake their worship, and offer incense to the Greek gods. The nation was in a most pitiful plight when Mattathias, a brave Jew, with six stalwart sons, aroused the people, bidding them stand firm to their faith, and resist the tyrant. So well did this patriotic family fight for their country, that their names became famous throughout the land, and in the end they gained the victory. But before this was accomplished the father died.

Now when the time drew near that Mattathias should die, he said unto his sons, Now hath pride and oppression gotten strength, and the time of destruction, and wrath hath come: Now, therefore, my sons, be ye zealous for the law, and give your lives for the covenant of your fathers. Call to remembrance what acts your fathers did in their time; so shall ye receive great honour and an everlasting name.

Wherefore, ye my sons, be valiant,

and shew yourselves men in the behalf of the law; for by it shall ye obtain glory. And, behold, I know that your brother Simon is a man of counsel; give ear unto him alway: he shall be a father unto you. As for Judas Maccabeus, he hath been mighty and strong, even from his youth up; let him be your captain, and fight the battle of the people.

So he blessed them, and was gathered to his fathers.

Then his son Judas, called Maccabeus, rose up in his stead. And all his brethren helped him, and so did all they that held with his father, and they fought with cheerfulness the battle of Israel. Now when Seron, a prince of the army of Syria, heard say that Judas had gathered unto him a multitude and company of the faithful to go out with him to war; he said, 'I will get me a name and honour in the kingdom: for I will go fight with Judas and them that are with him, who despise the king's commandment.'

So he made him ready to go up, and there went with him a mighty host of the ungodly to help him, and to be avenged of the children of Israel. And when he came near to the going up of Bethhoron, Judas went forth to meet him with a small company: who, when they saw the host coming to meet them, said unto Judas, 'How shall we be able, being so few, to fight against so great a multitude and so strong, seeing we are ready to faint with fasting all this day.'

Unto whom Judas answered, 'It is

no hard matter for many to be shut up in the hands of a few; and with the God of heaven it is all one, to deliver with a great multitude, or a small company: for the victory of battle standeth not in the multitude of a host; but strength cometh from heaven. They come against us in much pride and iniquity to destroy us, and our wives, and children; and to spoil us. But we fight for our lives and our laws. Wherefore the Lord himself will overthrow them before our face: and as for you, be ye not afraid of them.'

Now as soon as he had left off speaking, he leapt suddenly upon them, and so Seron and his host were overthrown before him.

And they pursued them from the going down of Bethhoron unto the plain, where were slain about eight hundred men of them; and the residue fled into the land of the Philistines. Then began the fear of Judas and his brethren, and an exceedingly great dread, to fall upon the nations round about them:

Insomuch as his fame came unto the king, and all nations talked of the battles of Judas.

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NOTES:—The books of the Maccabees are found in a small collection of Jewish writings (The Apocrypha) which was held to be useful to read, but not as so sacred as the books gathered together in the Old Testament. They are found in the Septuagint version, and are printed between the New and Old Testament in the Lutheran Bibles, and sometimes in our English ones.

This account comes as a fitting illustration to last week's lesson on the talents.

Simeon and Judas each used the talents which had been given them, and through the whole story of these brave brothers we note this beautiful trait of united service, each one giving of his best powers for the welfare of the nation.

The 74th and 79th psalms are supposed to have been written when the Jews were in the depths of their trouble and despair, and a very sad picture they set before us.

#### FOURTH SUNDAY.

UPHOLD THE HONOUR OF OUR COUNTRY.

Righteousness exalteth a nation:

But sin is a reproach to any people.

*Proverbs xiv. 34.*

READING. *Psalms xv.*

SETTING. — Here, in one of the old psalms, we have a description of one who is worthy to abide with the Lord. The greatest honour that a country could enjoy would be that of knowing that each one of its people was following in the path here set before us.

Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle?  
Who shall dwell in the holy hill?

He that walketh uprightly, and worketh  
righteousness,

And speaketh truth in his heart.

He that slandereth not with his tongue,

Nor doeth evil to his friend,

Nor taketh up a reproach against his  
neighbour.

In whose eyes a vile person is despised;  
But he honoureth them that fear the  
Lord.

He that sweareth to his own hurt, and  
changeth not,

He that putteth not out his money to  
usury,

Nor taketh reward against the innocent.

He that doeth these things shall never  
be moved.

It will be well to take up the points of honesty and truth, of slander and unkindness. Then the simple judging, not between rich and poor, or any such distinction; our regard for a man and our praise of him should be according to his worthiness, his 'fearing the Lord.' Refer to the September reading from Nehemiah with regard to the 'usury'; and illustrate the swearing, and changing not, by the story of the English governor of a French town who swore to surrender the keys to Du Guesclin, the French general, if succour did not arrive within six days. In the meantime, Du Guesclin died, and the question arose, 'Need we keep our promise?' But one is glad to think that the Englishman upheld the honour of his country by coming, at the end of the six days, and laying the keys on the bier of the dead governor.

Try to make the lads understand that even they may help to uphold the honour of their country. If their work is honestly done, and it goes across the sea, it will be known that England has sent good work; if men and women are truthful and trustworthy it will come to be known that these are characteristics of their nation. Happy will the world be, when every nation shall have learnt so to act that the description given in this old psalm will be true of all peoples.

## NOVEMBER.

### Our Duty to Mankind.

We owe allegiance to the state;  
But deeper, truer, more,  
To the sympathies that God hath set,  
Within our spirit's core;—  
Our country claims our fealty;  
We grant it so, but then,  
Before man made us citizens,  
Great Nature made us men.  
He's true to God who's true to man;  
Wherever wrong is done,  
To the humblest and the weakest,  
'Neath the all-beholding sun,  
That wrong is also done to us;  
And they are slaves most base,

Whose love of right is for themselves,  
And not for all their race.

God works for all. Ye cannot hem  
The hope of being free  
With parallels of latitude,  
With mountain range or sea.  
Put golden padlocks on Truth's lips,  
Be callous as ye will,  
From soul to soul o'er all the world,  
Leaps one electric thrill.

'Tis ours to save our brethren,  
With peace and love to win  
Their darkened hearts from error,  
Ere they harden it to sin;  
But if before his duty, man  
With listless spirit stands,  
Ere long the Great Avenger takes  
The work from out his hands.

—Lowell.

## FIRST SUNDAY.

ALL MEN ARE CHILDREN OF GOD.

'In every nation he that feareth God  
and worketh righteousness is acceptable  
to Him.'—*Acts* x. 35.

READING. *Acts* xi. 4-18.

SETTING.—We have seen, more especially in the readings of the first six months, how thoroughly convinced the Jews were that Jahvah was their God in a very special way. Gradually they came to hold a larger and broader idea of the Heavenly Father; and the Apostle Paul preached boldly that Gentile as well as Jew (the term Gentile was given to everyone who was not a Jew) were children of the One God. In this passage there is a story of a vision of the apostle Peter, which may be taken as a beautiful and true parable of the universal brotherhood of all men.

We are told that Peter had mingled with the Gentiles and had had some baptized (*Acts* x.); and that when he returned to Jerusalem the apostles and brethren rebuked him for eating with those outside the Jewish faith. His answer was that he had been taught of God by a vision.

Peter began, and expounded the matter unto them in order, saying, I was in the city of Joppa praying; and in a trance I saw a vision, a certain vessel descending, as it were a great sheet let down from heaven by four corners.

Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes I considered, and saw the four-footed beasts of the earth and wild beasts and creeping things and fowls of the air. And I heard also a voice saying unto me, 'Rise, Peter, kill and eat.'

But I said, 'Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath ever entered into my mouth.'

But a voice answered a second time out of heaven, 'What God hath cleansed treat thou not as common.'

And this was done thrice: and all were drawn up again into heaven.

And behold, forthwith three men stood before the house in which we were, having been sent from Cæsarea unto me; and the spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. And these six brethren also accompanied me; and we entered into the man's house: and he told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, 'Send to Joppa and fetch Simon, whose surname is Peter: who shall speak unto thee words, whereby thou shalt be saved, thou and all thy house.'

And as I began to speak, the holy spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how that he had said, John indeed baptized with

water; but ye shall be baptized in the holy spirit. If then God gave unto them the like gift as he did also unto us, when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could withstand God?

And when they heard these things, they held their peace and glorified God, saying, 'Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life!'

NOTE.—The teacher should have read *Acts x.* so as to understand the whole meaning of the incident referred to here, and explain it to the class.

As a rule the name of Peter is not associated with missionary zeal among the Gentiles, but for the purposes of this lesson it is not necessary to take up that part of the subject.

Explain that in hot countries some food is not good to eat, such as pig meat; so swine, for example, were called unclean.

Remind the scholars that even to-day there are much the same jealousies of foreigners and dislike to them; it seems difficult to accept the doctrine of the universal brotherhood. We are ready to credit 'the foreigner'—whoever he may be,—with unworthy thoughts, and often speak of his manners and customs as repulsive, when the real offence is that they are different from their own. The mistake and the unkindness of this misjudgment comes home to us when we are in another country and we find that we are 'foreigners' in our turn.

The chief means of overcoming this unjust method of treating our fellow-men is to remember that they are the children of the same Heavenly Father, and that He holds them as well as us in his keeping. If we add to this the maxim which bids all to 'Put yourself in his place,' it will enable us to fulfil the Golden Rule, 'to do unto others as we would that they should do unto us.'



## SECOND SUNDAY.

A BROTHER'S NEED IS A BROTHER'S CLAIM.

READING. *Luke x. 25-37.*

SETTING.—When the Jews were taken into captivity their country was peopled by foreigners; on their return to Judæa, these were pushed towards the north; while the Jews who settled in the province of Galilee, caused the strangers to gather towards the south. Thus it came about that the middle of the land of Palestine was occupied by another, a foreign nation—the Samaritans; and naturally the two peoples were not friendly one with another, for the Jews, by their refusal to admit fellowship with surrounding peoples, drew upon themselves much ill will. Yet it is to a Samaritan, to a foreigner, that Jesus gives the honour of true neighbourliness in the following parable.

And behold a certain teacher of the law stood up and tempted him, saying: 'Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?'

And Jesus said unto him: 'What is written in the law? how readest thou?'

And he answering, said: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.'

And Jesus said unto him: 'Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live!'

But he, wishing to justify himself, said to Jesus: 'And who is my neighbour?'

And Jesus answering said. 'A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him, and

wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

'By chance a certain priest was going down that way; and seeing him, he passed by on the other side. And in like manner a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side.

'But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him he was moved with compassion. And he went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on them oil and wine, and he set him on his beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pieces of money and gave to the host, and said unto him: "Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, I will repay thee on my return."

'Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was a neighbour unto him that fell among the robbers?' And he said, 'He that showed mercy on him.'

Then, said Jesus unto him: 'Go, and do thou likewise!'

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NOTES.—A map should be taken to the class, and Samaria pointed out; also Jerusalem and Jericho. One great point in the story is that Jesus selected one of these hated people for his hero, showing how deeply he felt that right action was the test of worthiness, and not mere nationality.

Things that may be noted: 1. The difference between knowing the law and doing it. The questioner of the Master knew the law, so did the priest and the Levite. The 'teacher of the law' answered correctly as to who was the real neighbour, but Jesus follows up what he said by the injunction 'Go and do thou likewise.'

2. The generous way in which the Samaritan acted. Of course if one uses the words *two pence* it gives quite a wrong idea to the scholars, because they naturally imagine that it is like twopence of our money; and even though we may tell them (and should do so) that the Roman penny is worth seven or eight times as much as ours, that will not explain matters, as the question is how far would the money go in those days? But the *spirit* of the story is quite clear. The man gave *himself* to his neighbour; bound up his wounds, put him on his own beast, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And even that was not all; for he paid his charges so far as he could, and he promised to pay whatever else was owing, on his return journey. So he left, bidding the host take care of the poor man. Truly he was a good man, no matter to what race he belonged.

### THIRD SUNDAY.

#### FORBEARANCE.

READING. *Luke ix. 46-56.*

SETTING.—In some Eastern lands people still believe that many forms of disease are due to evil spirits having entered the body, and men who are able to cure these are said to 'cast out' the demons, or devils. We read that Jesus had this power.

Our reading for to-day is in two parts. It begins with a discussion among the disciples as to who was the greatest, a discussion probably resulting from the disciples having met a man who had cast out devils in the name of Jesus, and yet who refused to mix with his followers.

And there arose a discussion among them, which of them should be greatest. But when Jesus saw the thought in their heart, he took a little child, and set him by his side, and said unto them, 'Whosoever shall receive this little child in my name receiveth me; and

whosoever shall receive me, receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same is great.'

And John answered and said, 'Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us.' But Jesus said unto him, 'forbid him not: for he that is not against you is for you.'

And it came to pass when the days were well nigh come that he should be received up, Jesus steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, and sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.

And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he were going to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, 'Lord wilt thou that we bid fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?' But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, 'Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.'

And they went into another village.

NOTES.—Ver. 49, 'And John answered;' this expression seems to indicate that the discussion referred to the action of this man who had 'cast out devils.' It seems to me that Jesus saw in this a kind action on the part of the man who thus troubled himself to bring the power of healing to a poor sufferer; and instead of judging of the greatness of one or another disciple, Jesus takes a child and declares that a kind service rendered to it is rendered to him; is rendered indeed to the Father who sent him.

The poem of Abou Ben Adhem may be read as another instance of kind action being accepted by God.

About Ben Adhem—may his tribe increase!—  
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace  
And saw, within the moonlight in the room,  
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,  
An angel, writing in a book of gold.  
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,  
And to the Presence in the room he said,  
'What writest thou?' The vision raised  
its head,

And, with a look made of all sweet accord,  
Answered, 'The names of those who love  
the Lord.'

'And is mine one?' said Abou. 'Nay,  
not so.'

Replied the angel. Adhem spoke more low,  
But cheerly still, and said, 'I pray thee, then.  
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men.'  
The angel wrote and vanished. The next  
night

He came again, with a great wakening light,  
And showed their names whom Love of God  
had blessed,  
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

When John reproachfully said, 'He followed not with us,' Jesus replied, 'Forbid him not, for he that is not against you is for you.' A lesson we all need to learn; for we are all apt to think that if a man does not follow us in thoughts and beliefs, he cannot be as 'great' as we, however good may be his action. It is so difficult to bear with one another!

The second incident refers again to the intercourse between the Jews and the Samaritans, spoken of in the setting of the last reading. There Jesus gives a story of a kind-hearted Samaritan. Here we have an incident where the racial enmity comes out on the Samaritan side. When the people of the village see that Jesus and his party are going through to Jerusalem they will have nothing to do with them. James and John remember a terrible story of the great Elijah (*2 Kings* i.), who, in such a case, was said to have called down fire from Heaven. Will not Jesus do the same? But the Master rebuked them, and, according to some copies of the Gospels (A.V.

and R.V. margin), he says, 'Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of!' The loving spirit of Jesus teaches forbearance; forbearance not merely to friends and neighbours, but to all men everywhere. He knew that there were excuses for this unhappy feeling, and so he turned quietly aside and passed into another village.

The double lesson of to-day, then, is Bear and Forbear.

#### FOURTH SUNDAY.

##### THE FRUITS OF UNIVERSAL LOVE.

##### READING. *Isaiah* xxxv.

SETTING.—The passage for to-day's lesson was written when the troubles, which culminated in the Captivity, were almost paralysing the Hebrew nation. Isaiah, whose faith in his God is almost perfect, looks forward into the future with absolute trust and confidence. The time will come when all shall be well; when his beloved nation, having purified itself from sin, will once more find joy and happiness. But 'the time was not yet.' What Isaiah prophesied for the future of his people we may look upon as a beautiful poem, setting forth the blessing that will spread among all nations, when the spirit of sonship to God and universal brotherhood of man has brought forth its glorious fruit.

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to them, the excellence of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, the excellency of our God.

Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, fear not; behold your God! Ven-

geance will come, even God's recompense; He will come and will save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; in the desert shall waters break out, and streams in the barren land.

And the heated sands shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground, springs of water; and in the habitations where the jackals lay shall be a place for the sweet cane and the paper reeds.

And a highway shall be there, and a way; and it shall be called 'The way of Holiness.' The unclean shall not pass over it, for He shall be with them; the wayfaring man, even the simple ones, shall not go astray therein. No lion shall be there, no ravenous beast shall go up thereon, these shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come with singing into Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

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NOTES.—If the teacher will read through this passage and try to picture the scene, and compare it in his mind with the actual surroundings of the writer—(this may be easily done by noting that the description of what 'will be' is just the reverse of what the prophet was witnessing at that time)—the beautiful vision of 'the good time coming' will be brought more vividly to the scholars. It is the same in meaning as the coming of God's Kingdom, to which Jesus so frequently refers.

And how will God's Kingdom come? It will come when everyone strives to do his heavenly Father's will; and we can, each one of us, help to hasten, or help to hinder the happy time, according as we are true or untrue to our highest ideal, to the voice of God within us.

#### FIFTH SUNDAY.

As this is the real end of the series, —the last month of the year being devoted to Examples,—it will be well to take a survey of the whole year's lessons, leading the class quickly through the whole of the headings, and showing their underlying unity. The selection given on the First Sunday should be read at the commencement, letting the scholars understand how the work of the year has turned upon that.

It is here that the teacher will find his note book useful, for an hour devoted to looking through it beforehand, will enable him to see what are the points on which he desires to place special stress.

If, as has been suggested, the scholars have also kept a book, in which they have entered the subject of the lesson each Sunday, together with a few words upon it, or a chosen quotation, they will be interested in going through it again, and noting how one Sunday's lesson has borne on the rest.

These books are often greatly valued by the scholars, and I have known some who have kept them for years after leaving school, and who have gone over them again and again.



## Fifth Section.

### Examples.

#### DECEMBER.

'Religion! What was it that Arnold told us of religion? It was that religion—the relation of the soul to God—depends on our own moral and spiritual characters. He made us understand that the only thing for which God supremely cares, the only thing that God supremely loves, is goodness—that the only thing which is supremely hateful to God is wickedness. All other things are useful, admirable, beautiful in their several ways. All forms, ordinances, means of instruction, means of amusement, have their place in our lives. But Religion, the true Religion of Jesus Christ, consists in that which makes us wiser and better, more loving, more tender, more considerate, more pure. Therefore in his view, there was no place or time from which religion is shut out—there is no place or time where we cannot be serving God by serving our fellow-creatures.'—A. P. STANLEY, late Dean of Westminster. *Address at Rugby School, on Dr. Arnold.*

#### FIRST SUNDAY.

##### HELPING OUR FAMILY.

READING. Taken from *Genesis* xlv.-xlvii.

SETTING.—The story of Joseph is so well known that it scarcely needs a 'setting'; though this pretty ending to the story is not, perhaps, so familiar as the rest. Joseph has made himself known to his brethren, and now he is arranging for them to fetch his father, and their households, and to come to settle in Egypt.

And the news was heard in Pharaoh's house that Joseph's brethren were come, and it pleased Pharaoh well.

And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, 'say unto your brethren, "This do ye; lade your beasts and go, get you into the

land of Canaan; and take your father, and your households, and come unto me, and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land."

'Command them also, saying, "This do ye; take you waggons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father, and come. Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours."

And the sons of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them waggons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way. To all of them he gave changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five changes of raiment.

And to his father he sent after this manner: ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt; and ten she asses laden with corn, and bread, and other food for his father by the way.

So Joseph sent his brethren away, and they departed; and he said unto them, 'See that ye fall not out by the way.'

And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan, unto Jacob their father.

And they told him, saying, 'Joseph is yet alive, and he is ruler over all the land of Egypt.'

And his heart fainted, for he believed them not. Then they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the waggons which Joseph had sent to carry

him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived: and he said, 'It is enough; Joseph, my son, is yet alive; I will go and see him before I die.'

And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to Goshen to meet Israel his father, and he presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck and wept a good while.

And Israel said unto Joseph, 'Now let me die, as I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive.'

And Joseph said, 'I will go up to Pharaoh and will tell him that my brethren and my father's house are come unto me.' And he went up unto Pharaoh and told him.

And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, 'Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee; in the best of the land let them dwell, even in Goshen; and if thou knowest able men among them, then make them rulers over my cattle.'

And Joseph brought in Jacob his father; and Jacob blessed Pharaoh the king. And Joseph gave to his father and brethren the best of the land of Egypt, as Pharaoh had commanded. And he nourished his father and his brethren, and all his father's household with bread, according to the number of their little ones.

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NOTE.—We have given readings for this month, as it is pleasant to take one at the commencement of the lesson; but the suggestion is that the teacher should gather together the lessons referring to the subject (for this Sunday it will be those of August). The example will be found on page 215, Elizabeth or the Exiles of Siberia.

## SECOND SUNDAY.

### HELPING ONE'S NEIGHBOURS.

READING. From Rev. W. Gannett.

'Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.'

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that two-thirds of all that makes it 'beautiful to be alive' consists in cup-offerings of water. Not an hour of life's journey but is rendered easier by their freshening, or harder by their absence. Why? Because most of us are burden-bearers of one sort or another; because to most of us a large part of the journey is a dull and trivial trudge; because there is much dust upon the road, and—not so many *bad* places as probably we think—yet many *common* places: and it is dust and stretches of the common-place that make one thirsty. If the feeling on our shoulders were of wings instead of burden; if on Mondays, 'in some good cause not our own,' we were marching singing to a battle, and on Saturdays were coming back victorious, then the greetings on the way would make less difference to us. But as it is, we crave the roadside recognitions which give praise for the good deed attempted, pity for the hard luck and the fall, a handsome lift now and then to ease the burden's chafe, and now and then a word of sympathy in the step-step-stepping that takes us through the dust; and this is all that most of us can wait to give, for we, too, are here

on business. You cannot step my journey for me, cannot carry me on your back, cannot do me any great service; but it makes a world of difference to me whether I do my part in the world with, or without, these little helps which fellow-travellers can exchange.

'I am busy, Johnnie, and can't help it,' said the father, writing away, when the little fellow hurt his finger. 'Yes, you could—you might have said "Oh!"' sobbed Johnnie. There's a Johnnie in tears inside all of us upon occasions. The old Quaker was right: 'I expect to pass through this life but once. If there is any kindness or any good thing I can do to my fellow-beings, let me do it now. I shall pass this way but once.'

'An arm of aid to the weak,  
A friendly hand to the friendless,  
Kind words so short to speak  
But whose echo is endless,—  
The world is wide, these things are small,  
They may be nothing—but they are all!'

NOTE.—This beautiful little extract will make an excellent introduction to a chat of the series of lessons for September. The Example will be found on page 9, where is given a few reminiscences of the good old cobbler, John Pounds.

### THIRD SUNDAY.

#### HELPING ONE'S COUNTRY.

READING. *Matthew* v. 1-16.

SETTING.—In this chapter and the two following ones, there are gathered together many of the sayings of Jesus, most of which are to be found in one or other of the Gospels of Mark or Luke, in separate places.

These three chapters are called The Sermon on the Mount, and commence with The Blessings or Beatitudes, which form a fitting prelude to the ministry of the Great Teacher. With these words he seeks to comfort, to strengthen, the hearts of those who are seeking to walk in the right path. Blessings will come to the sad, the suffering, the striving ones, if they are but faithful. The Heavenly Father rules. He knoweth all things; therefore all must be well with those who trust Him.

And seeing the multitudes, Jesus went up the mountain; and when he had sat down, his disciples came unto him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn; for they — shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake; rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward

in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you. Ye are the salt of the earth; and if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted; it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men.

Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid; neither do men light a lamp and put it under the bushel, but on the lampstand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house!

Even so let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

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NOTES.—This reading is to be followed by a repetition of the October lessons—helping one's country. Some example for this will probably occur to the teacher; Moses, if one wishes for one from the Bible; Joan of Arc, especially if Mark Twain's book on her pure and noble life has been read. Or King Alfred, whose splendid service to England is being spoken of just now, on account of the 1,000th anniversary being at hand, would be a fitting example. The one necessity is that the teacher should have an enthusiasm for the character with which he illustrates his lesson.

It always seems to me that the Beatitudes are especially applicable to those who 'spend' themselves for the good of others. 'Blessed be the pure in heart' may well be said to the girl patriot of France, and her name and memory are blessed to-day; verily she did 'see God,' even in spite of the flames. So of Moses, of Alfred, and of every patriot and martyr; the blessing which follows upon right doing, of earnest striving for the welfare of others, must have been a constant help and incentive.

#### FOURTH SUNDAY.

##### HELPING MANKIND.

'The noble love of Jesus impels a man to do great things, and stirs him up to be always longing for what is more perfect.'—*Imitation of Christ.*

READING. From 'A City without a Church,' by Prof. H. Drummond.

I plead for *good men*, because good men are good leaven. If their goodness stop, short of that, if the leaven does not mix with that which is unleavened, if it does not do the work of leaven,—that is, to *raise something*, it is not the leaven of Christ.

The question for good men to ask themselves is: Is my goodness helping others?

Christ sets his followers no tasks. He appoints no hours. He allots no sphere. He himself simply went about and did good. He did not stop life to do some special thing which should be called religious. His life was religion. Each day, as it came, brought round in the ordinary course its natural ministry. Each village along the highway had someone waiting to be helped. His pulpit was the hillside, his congregation a woman at a well. The poor, wherever he met them, were his clients; the sick, as often as he found them, his opportunity, his work was everywhere; his workshop was the world. Our associations of Christ are all of the wayside. We never think of him in connection with a church. We cannot picture him in the garb of a priest; or belonging to any of the classes who



specialize religion. His service was of a universal human order. He was the son of Man, the citizen.

'Jesus, by thy simple beauty,  
By thy depth of love unknown,  
We are drawn to earnest duty,  
We come near the Father's throne.

'Faith, and hope, and love shine o'er us,  
Make our daily lives divine;  
Friend and Brother, gone before us,  
Be our thoughts and deeds like thine.'

NOTES.—Naturally the example to which we turn for illustration of the November lessons (of helping mankind) is that of Jesus. It may help the teacher to refer to page 143 to the short lesson notes on the life of Jesus, which gives a slight sketch of the main points; but probably the lessons taken from his teaching during this year's course will afford ample illustration of his wonderful service to mankind,—a service which is bearing fruit still. His simple but intense faith in the Father, his absolute reliance on Him, and his constant desire to help his brother man to take up his position of sonship to the Father, and to strive to be worthy of it, makes the lesson of his life a real Gospel for all men.

It is indeed wonderful to see how good and noble lives of those who have really helped mankind onward and upward,—those 'who live again, in minds made better by their presence,'—never seem to be extinguished; they remain for ever as witnesses to God in the world,

'And their uninterrupted breath  
Inspires a thousand lives.'



## COMMUNION WITH GOD.

Is there a way by which my soul  
May soar beyond this earth,  
And hold communion sweet with Him  
Who gave my spirit birth?

May I not speak, as face to face,  
And every trial tell,  
To Him who reigns through time and space,  
The Great Invisible?

Yes, blest be God! though o'er the brim  
My cup of sorrow flows,  
My throbbing heart may lean on Him,  
And find a sure repose!

Then up, my soul, nor prostrate lie  
For ever in the dust,  
But lift to God thy tearful eye,  
With loving hope and trust.

Arise, and go to Him and say,  
Father forgive my sin,  
Lead me henceforth in thy true way  
And cleanse my soul within!

And He will hear, if thou shalt call  
On Him in contrite grief,  
And low before his footstool fall  
To seek from sin relief!

For though his love—so long forgot—  
(Remembered now with shame,)  
Seemed veiled awhile—yet, is He not  
Thy Father all the same?

Then teach me, O my Father, how  
My soul may utterance find,  
The accents meet to win the ear  
Of one so wondrous kind!

And help me henceforth so to live,  
From sin and error free,  
That all my powers may join to give  
More perfect praise to Thee.

I. M. W.

# Teachers in Council

## A Summer School for Sunday School Teachers.

**O**NE of the most striking and successful developments of the Oxford Extension movement has been its Summer meeting. It has been found possible to gather together during the summer vacation a large number of students who have gained real and lasting help from their fortnight's stay in beautiful Oxford. The Colleges have freely opened their doors to these crowds of visitors; and many a worker from the grimy and busy towns of the Midlands and the North, and many an eager spirit from the quiet South and West, has found his few days of Collegiate life in Oxford a delightful and never-to-be-forgotten experience. It has been at once a recreation and a mental stimulus. The promoters have been fortunate in securing the services of the most distinguished scholars in their various branches of learning, to give courses of lectures which have been attended by thousands, hungering and thirsting for knowledge. Not much real work, it may be said, can be done in a fortnight or three weeks. No, but lines of study may be commenced,

direction may be given, an impulse may be received, thought may be quickened, the benefit of which is quite incalculable. It is not a mere playing at study. Yet of course the element of pleasure enters largely into the attraction of these meetings. It is a real refreshment of spirit to sojourn for a few days amid the beautiful buildings, gardens and surroundings of our ancient University.

What has been done on a large scale by the University as a whole for the general student, has also been done on a small scale by one of the colleges for a special class. Mansfield has had its Summer School of Theology, attended by ministers of various denominations, who have come together to hear from men like Driver, Sanday, Cheyne, Adam Smith, Bruce and Fairbairn, the latest results of Biblical criticism and theological research.

Would it not be possible to utilize Manchester College in much the same way for the benefit of the Sunday school teachers in our Free Churches? Send the teachers to school! Why not? Heaven knows many of them sadly need it. Moreover, the moment any man ceases to be a learner, he ceases to be an effective teacher; he gets out of

sympathy with scholars, he loses sight of the process by which new truth enters the mind. It is by the act of acquiring, and by watching the process by which we ourselves acquire, that we can help others to acquire. The best of teachers needs to be always increasing his own store of knowledge, always improving his own methods, always mending his own deficiencies. And many of us are not among the best. We draw our teachers very often from the less educated sections of our churches. The needs are so great that we have to press into the service not a few unwilling workers. We draw upon our senior classes to supply gaps in the teaching staff, and the superintendent gives a sigh of relief when he is not compelled to put three classes into one. Who can visit our schools with an observant eye and not soon conclude that their most urgent need is to improve the quality of the teaching! How many of our teachers are lamentably ignorant of the Bible! How few of them have any perception that teaching is an art to be studied, that it has its rules and theories and methods, as much as the art of medicine. It is true, practice and experience do much for the earnest teacher. But while experience is a good school, the fees are high, and the course is apt to be long and tedious. In his admirable lectures on teaching, Dr. Fitch says:—‘It is a great part of the economy of life to know how to turn to profitable account the accumulated experience of others. I know few things much more pathetic than

the utterances of some Head Masters at their annual conferences, at which, one after another, even of those who have fought their way to the foremost rank of their profession, rises up to say, “We have been making experiments all our lives; we have learned much, but we have learned it at the expense of our pupils; and much of the knowledge which has thus slowly come into our possession might easily have been imparted to us at the outset, and have saved us from many mistakes.”

If it be replied that the problem before the Sunday school teacher is different from that of the schoolmaster, I reply, ‘It is different, but only in scope and subject matter. You have to teach, to impart knowledge, to set the mind of the child thinking; only with less opportunity than the day school teacher, and therefore with more need of pleasing and skilful methods.’ It is true that in the Sunday school the imparting of information is of less importance than the winning of trust, respect and affection. It is wonderful how love and sympathy and a hearty personal interest in the children of a class atone for inadequate teaching and defective methods. Let it be fully and thankfully acknowledged that admirable work is often done in our schools by men and women whose mental equipment is sadly at fault, but who have the welfare of their little scholar-friends at heart. A real sympathy with children teaches the teacher much. A knowledge of life and the human heart counts for more than

ability to make an accurate analysis of the book of Job. Many a teacher, beloved by his class, would not pass an elementary examination in the names and dates of the Kings of Israel. Yes, character, sympathy, disposition, temper, fine moral sense, the desire to help and serve, and all for love and nothing for reward, are incomparably before teaching. Yet, these are the very persons who would be the first to admit that teaching power is what they want, and the last to excuse their want of knowledge on the ground that they love much. This Sunday school work is a great business, and it demands the best we can put into it.

Something is done in nearly all good schools to improve the quality of the teaching by 'preparation classes.' Model lessons are sometimes given; conferences are held which, truth to tell, do not do much more than give teachers a little social encouragement; notes of lessons are issued which often puzzle more than help, since the teachers have not the preliminary knowledge which is taken for granted. Spasmodic attempts to interest the educated young men of the congregations are made with the poorest results. It is time our churches and ministers took the matter seriously in hand. A great lift must be given to our Sunday schools if they are to meet the needs of altered times, and of a more highly trained and developed generation.

As contributing towards this greatly-needed lift, a 'Manchester College

Summer School for Teachers' might do much. Let us suppose that it is held year by year during the last fortnight in July and that it is attended by about fifty teachers, one from each of fifty schools. We must, of course, remember that many teachers could not afford either the time or the money, and that not every year would the same schools send a representative. But as we have more than three hundred schools and three thousand six hundred teachers to draw from, a yearly average of fifty is not an extravagant number to expect. Schools might even arrange to pay year by year the expenses of one teacher, which would simply be the railway fare and cost of living. (The Vacation lodgings in Oxford are plentiful and cheap.) A carefully arranged syllabus of lectures and classes will have been prepared by a 'Summer School Committee,' on which each Sunday School Association and the Professors of the College would be represented. It would not be difficult to secure for such an object the services of some of our best Scholars. Names will at once occur to every one, of experts in Biblical learning, experts in psychology, experts in teaching, experts in history who would throw themselves with enthusiasm into the work of such a school. It would also be extremely desirable to obtain the help of a Head Master or two from our Board Schools, and a teacher of method from one of the Normal Colleges. The lectures and classes would occupy the



mornings and evenings, leaving the afternoons free for recreation and exploring the treasures of Oxford. The subjects of the lectures and classes would probably vary from year to year, but I can imagine the syllabus of the first year arranged in three divisions: I. Organisation. II. Method. III. Subject matter. Under Organisation would come: (a) School-rooms, classrooms and their appliances; (b) classification of scholars; (c) discipline; (d) the occupations of an infant department; (e) rewards, and many other subjects, such as the duties of a superintendent, etc., etc. Under Method—most important subjects would be considered: (a) the art of questioning; (b) the art of describing and narrating *i.e.*, picture-making and story-telling; (c) how to make lessons interesting; (d) memory lessons, repetition and catechetical instruction; (e) continuity in teaching; (f) how to teach the facts of religious history, etc. Under Subject-matter would naturally fall: (a) schemes and lessons; (b) the books and leading ideas of the Old Testament; (c) the books and leading ideas of the New Testament; (d) the growth and ground work of Ethics; (e) the Christian as compared with other types of character; (f) the Church and our Free Churches, etc.

This must not be taken as a complete outline, but only suggestive of the line a fortnight's work might follow. Then there are single subjects on which much is to be learned, such as Sunday School Addresses, Sunday

School Hymns,<sup>1</sup> Sunday School Services, The Study of Child Nature, the Conduct of Senior Classes, Teachers' Libraries, Guilds and the School, Week-night meetings, Amusements in relation to Sunday schools, and many kindred subjects, which will readily suggest themselves to minds of any experience in the great work. Lastly, I can conceive that the atmosphere of devotion and consecration in such a Summer meeting, the morning prayer and the Sunday services in the beautiful chapel, the giving up wholly of mind and heart for a few days to the great question 'How better to serve my generation according to the will of God?' would send many back to their homes and work with a warmer zeal and a larger outlook; with more humility it may be,

<sup>1</sup> Oh, the doggerel sometimes sung at anniversaries! Yet perhaps our children have heard nothing quite so outrageous as two of the hymns sung at a Sunday School Anniversary in a Congregational Church not one hundred miles from London, only this very summer. Here is the chorus of one selected for the infants:—

Yes, yes, yes, oh yes;  
Jesus died for little ones like me,  
You say how do I know it?  
John iii. 16 will show it,  
That big word 'whosoever' just means me.

Here is another sung on the same occasion:—

God wants the boys, the merry, merry boys,  
The noisy boys, the funny boys,  
The thoughtless boys—  
God wants the boys with all their joys.

God wants the girls, the happy-hearted girls,  
The loving girls, the best of girls,  
The worst of girls—  
God wants to make the girls His pearls.

and yet with a brighter hope and a more adequate appreciation of the task before them.

And would not the work and influence of such a Summer school reach very much farther than the individuals who actually attend its classes? Would it not tend to create a public feeling in our churches which would bring into the ranks of our teachers many who now hold aloof? Would it not teach the teachers that this is indeed a branch of the Christian ministry—needing the same spirit, the same seriousness, the same enthusiasm of humanity, and in some measure the same preparation. The greatest of all teachers in describing his own mission once said ‘I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.’ May we not without irreverence say that this, in a humble, far-off way, is the aim of every Sunday school teacher? He wants his scholars to live a grander, sweeter, fuller, richer and more useful life. He who has this ideal will welcome every means that helps to make him a more adequate instrument for its accomplishment.

Will not our central Sunday School Association take the initiative in this matter? Why should we always wait until other bodies and churches have shown us how to do a thing? Let us have a little courage and lead the way.

JOSEPH WOOD.

Birmingham.

## II.

DEAR ‘HELPER,’

I have read with interest and general sympathy Mr. Wood’s proposals for a Summer School for Sunday School Teachers. I do not see why such a plan should not bring teachers together in much larger numbers than he seems to anticipate, and I feel sure that it would prove popular and attractive.

Only in one thing—and that a detail—do I feel disposed to give counsel a little at variance with Mr. Wood’s. He divides the topics of instruction into three, Organisation, Method, and Subject Matter. On Method I think a really experienced and capable teacher, such as Mr. J. J. Wright, can give a lecture or two of an extremely helpful kind. On Subject Matter there is, of course, a boundless field for instruction, if only the instructors will be simple and not too professional. In such a scheme you do not necessarily want to get the man who knows most of the subject, to lecture. What you want is a man or woman with adequate knowledge and with the gift of infusing life into his subject matter, kindling interest, and impressing clear and fruitful ideas. But I put in a protest against having lectures on ‘Organisation’ at all. I venture to think that at our Sunday school conferences, local and national, we waste much time and talent over this matter. It is hardly ever the case that the advice which is excellent for the particular class of school with which the

reader or lecturer is connected, is applicable to schools of another class. In these matters teachers and superintendents do best to hammer things out for themselves, guided by the needs, exigencies, peculiarities, and idiosyncrasies of their own particular school. Again and again at Essex Hall and elsewhere have teachers commented to me on the total inapplicability of the advice given, to their own case; and I have myself smiled inwardly to think how futile the plans proposed would be if attempted in the schools I know best. Concerning 'classification of scholars, discipline, the occupations of an infant department, rewards,' etc., there is no 'best way' of an absolute kind to be taught *ex cathedra*. The very opposite plans are best in different cases, according to the size of the school, the class of scholars, the culture of the teachers, and an endless variety of other considerations; and each school has to find out its own 'best way' for itself.

But with this exception I think Mr. Wood's suggestions admirable. Teachers do want to be helped *how* to teach and *what* to teach. And the friendly intercourse would be in every way excellent and helpful.

Probably there will not be present 'one from each of fifty schools,' but a dozen from one, half-a-dozen from another, two or three from a third, and so on. But it will be a beginning, and the thing ought to grow. The Committee of the Sunday School Association never waxes old. It is ever

youthful in spirit, fresh in resource, hopeful in temper. We look to it to initiate this new thing and to make it go.

R. A. ARMSTRONG.

Liverpool.

### III.

The problem of providing for Sunday school teachers a training which shall render them well equipped for their work, has scarcely yet been seriously grappled with. No one doubts the importance and difficulty of the work carried on in our Sunday schools. All will agree that the task of cultivating the Christian virtues in the hearts of our children demands the best that we teachers can give, of heart and mind. Yet there is but little organised effort to increase the efficiency of our teaching. I know there are difficulties in the way of any such attempts. Teachers are few, and many of them are unable or indisposed to devote time and pains to self-preparation.

But there are many who heartily believe that if a thing is worth doing it is worth doing *well*, and would gladly avail themselves of opportunities of 'going to school' in order that they might be able to teach the better.

As a step in the right direction a Summer School at Oxford would be splendid. It is practicable, and its results, in the way of stimulus, would be immense.

Assuming that the authorities at Manchester College fall in with the suggestion and co-operate with the Sunday School Association, the work-

ing out of the idea into practical detail is easy.

The cost of living at Oxford would not be more than twenty-five shillings per week, so a fortnight would cost, including railway fare, about £3 each person. It is, however, quite possible that some of the teachers, to whom a fortnight spent at Oxford would be of incalculable value, might not be able to afford this sum. Accordingly I offer the following suggestion.

Let the Sunday School Association appoint a Committee to work the scheme, and let a fund be created and contributions invited from our churches. Let each Sunday school which subscribes £1 1s. to the fund, have the privilege of electing one teacher who shall be entitled to spend a fortnight at the college on paying £1 1s. Thus £2 2s. would be paid for each person, the difference between this sum and the actual cost being paid out of the fund.

Should more than one teacher in any school wish to go, any others *might do so*, up to the limit of accommodation, on payment of £2 2s.

Of course, schools could, if they thought fit, pay the whole or any portion of the cost of their teacher's visit.

Should this scheme not be approved of, the sub-committee could simply ascertain the cost of living and charge each visitor the full amount, leaving teachers and schools to arrange questions of finance between them.

As to the work to be done at the school, it must, of course, be borne in

mind that the fortnight would, in most cases, be the annual holiday of the visitor; that is, the only time in the year when one gets an opportunity of recruiting one's health; and recreation, therefore, must play a large part in the proceedings. But no place could be more delightful for a holiday than Oxford, rich as it is in natural beauty and historical associations. Excursions could be made to the colleges and other places of interest in and around Oxford. There is the river for those fond of boating, while walkers might ramble to their heart's content. In the evening could be held social gatherings, concerts, or conferences on topics of interest.

But although recreation would figure largely, yet the important work of the school would, of course, be to arouse and foster a love of knowledge, to impart luminous ideas, each of which might be a starting point of a train of thought and inaugurate a course of study during the months to follow; and to communicate to the teachers all that long experience has gained as to the best methods of teaching the young ideas of children 'to shoot' and bring forth blossom and fruit. The teachers would, doubtless, vary greatly in age and intellectual attainments, so that the task of giving lectures which would be inspiring and illuminating to all, would be difficult, though by no means impossible. I once attended a course of lectures by Mr. Addis on 'The Christology of the New Testament,' and I remember how luminous the



lecturer made the birth and development of the Messianic idea.

Such a course would be helpful to all. Or some particular period of Jewish history might be taken, and the life and thoughts of the people, their social and religious aims, their institutions and political relations, might be made the subject of lecture and discussion.

I am certain that those who attended the school would never forget it. It would create new interests, widen the mental horizon, and awaken enthusiasm. It would form friendships, too, which give one the strength which springs from sympathy.

CHARLES A. GINEVER.

London.

#### IV.

*Is it practicable?* is about the only question I find myself asking, after carefully reading Mr. Wood's suggestive proposal. Of course it ought to be practicable for us to provide such a school for teachers. There is hardly anything more important for us to do at the present time, not only in the interests of our Sunday schools but in the interests of our churches. With some practical experience of our National Home Reading Union Summer Assemblies I do not see why a summer school for our Sunday school teachers should not be tried. Nay, if we have zeal enough, if we have faith enough in our purpose, and are prepared to meet with and overcome many difficulties, I do not see why such a scheme should not, like other

'summer schools' in England, Scotland, and America, in the truest sense succeed. I, for one, should be heartily willing to co-operate in any way to make the scheme a success. But we must not blink at the initial difficulties (1) as to students, (2) as to lecturers. A pretty wide knowledge of our Sunday schools tells one that the bulk of our teachers are so placed in the week-time that in order to attend at Oxford or anywhere else for a fortnight they would have to get off from work on purpose. Only a small proportion of them ever get a fortnight's holiday; and such holidays as they do get happen at various times in different parts of the country. Still, even in the case of these, among whom we often find some of the best teaching power, one a year might be sent at a cost of £5, to include railway fare and lodgings, and part loss of wages. It would be well spent money which might come partly from the local school sending the teacher and partly from a central fund. Moreover, it would be accounted an honour to be sent to Oxford! We have other teachers (alas too few!) who could manage the fortnight at Oxford more easily, but at present the bulk of our teachers are in the circumstances previously mentioned. My hope, however, for our Sunday schools in connection with this scheme, as indeed also apart from this scheme, is in the sons and daughters of our 'better families.' There are such in most congregations. Get hold of these early enough, induce them to go to

this summer school for the training of Sunday school teachers two or three years in succession, and immense good will come of it. My experience of these young people is that, as a rule, they would be willing enough to teach in Sunday school, but that they sincerely feel they don't know how! A minister could easily pick out one or two such each year to send; and in many cases the school would benefit if it also sent the Minister himself to the summer school for Sunday school teachers. There would soon be a difference in our schools.

(2) As to lecturers. Mr. Wood says, 'Names will at once occur to every one of experts in Biblical learning, etc., etc.' There's a reef on which the whole thing might easily be wrecked! Of course the summer school would give due attention to the best Biblical knowledge, but it must be knowledge useful for Sunday school purposes, which experts so often seem unable to give. Which only amounts to saying in short: 'Be very careful in the choice of lecturers, and, whatever the subject, let them be practical men.' In addition to the other excellent suggestions as to a Board School Master, etc.—could not the services be secured of some actual Sunday school superintendents and teachers from some such large schools (orthodox, of course) as I have seen in Stockport, Huddersfield, and other towns? Let me conclude by cordially supporting Mr. Wood's proposal.

Manchester.

J. J. WRIGHT.

## Mellie and John Henry and Eliza.

A STORY FOR THE VERY LITTLE ONES.

### INTRODUCTION.

**T**HIS little story is intended for very young children, and contains the ground-work for lessons on work, perseverance, punctuality, unselfishness, good temper, and truth.

It should be borne in mind that little children love repetition.

I should myself take the lessons thus:

- I. Read the story, and point out Nelly's good temper.
- II. Read chapters I. and II. and enlarge on the work little children can do.
- III. Question on chapters I. and II.; read chapter III., and talk about perseverance.
- IV. Read chapter III. again, and show how much the children gain by punctuality.
- V. Read chapter V., and talk about unselfishness.
- VI. Read chapter V. and talk about truth.

No doubt variations and illustrations will occur to every teacher. We should remember, I think, that the child-mind cannot grasp many ideas at once; one moral at a time is enough. We must remember, too, that a child likes to have truths offered to it very simply, though with plenty of illustration; it likes goodness and badness to be very

clearly defined, and moral axioms to be very clearly stated.

In giving this little story, which is, of necessity, short, it will be found impossible to add too many details to please our young scholars. Were I telling it, I should elaborate and say what the children ate, how they were clothed, how far they went to school, and so on.

The great thing in teaching children is to see our lessons from their point of view.

#### CHAPTER I.

There were three little children sitting on a doorstep. Every day at half-past twelve, you might have seen those children sitting there. At least, every day but Saturday and Sunday. The eldest was eight years old. Her name was Nelly, and she was in standard one in the day-school. The other two were in the infant school. One was called John Henry; he was six years old. The other was called Eliza, and she was only four. They had no father; and their mother had to work very hard to get them enough bread and butter to eat. When the children went to school in the morning, she went to work and locked the door behind her. When they came home in the middle of the day, they had to sit on the doorstep and wait until she came back to give them their dinner. On this day, about which I am telling you, Nelly and John Henry did not look at all happy. Eliza was such a tiny child; she did not feel unhappy

unless she was hurt, or frightened, and nothing was hurting or frightening her now. Nelly was quite pretty, really, but she was not looking pretty at all. For one thing her face was so dirty, you could hardly see the real colour of it; and her hair was so black and touzled you would never have guessed that, if it were clean, it would be shiny and golden. Her pinafore had a great three-cornered tear in it, and there were so many hooks and eyes gone from her frock behind, that her petticoat showed through the gaps that were left. Indeed, she looked like a little bundle of dirty rags. Worst of all there was an angry frown on her face, and there were two big tears running down from her blue eyes, which put one in mind of Dirty Jack in the poem, who 'left the black streaks running down both his cheeks and made them look worse than before.'

John Henry was a fat little boy in knickerbockers. His cheeks were so rosy that they shone like apples, even through the dirt. He was not crying, but, except for that, he was not a bit nicer to look at than Nelly. Little Eliza sat on the edge of the doorstep and poked her finger in and out of the dust on the path. Sometimes she sucked her finger and then she poked in the dust again. I suppose she thought dust tasted good.

It was not a clean street these children lived in, there was nothing pretty and green in it; there was nothing nice to look at but the window of the shop at the corner. There were

a great many interesting things in the shop-window; red-herrings,—sometimes mother sent Nelly to buy one for tea—cakes, sweets; the sweets were all sorts of colours, and nearly every week the children got a penny or two to spend on ‘toffies,’ and then they sucked them until they felt quite sick and very cross. There were kites in the window, too, and tops and balls and money-boxes and a glass tumbler full of marbles; more things altogether than I have time to tell you about. Every day the children used to go and flatten their noses against the window and point out to each other the things they wanted to buy; but, somehow, when they had a penny, they never thought of buying anything but sweets. They had no sweets to-day as they sat on the doorstep; it was Monday, and when mother gave them a penny it was almost always on Saturday.

The children in the street were not all as dirty and untidy as Nelly, and John Henry, and Eliza. Some of them were very neat and clean; they wore pretty pink and blue pinafores, without holes in them; their hair was nicely brushed and their shoes were blacked. But then they did not have to sit on a cold doorstep and wait for their mother to come home from work. John Henry could not think why Nelly was crying. He was old enough to think a little, and he knew what kind of things she generally cried for. In fact, they all cried together as a rule, and laughed together too, for they were generally all pleased by the same things and

vexed by the same things. He felt as if he ought to be crying now, since Nelly was crying, but he really could not see anything to cry for. They cried if they were very hungry, but they had had plenty of breakfast this morning; they cried if they were very cold, but now the sun was shining quite pleasantly on their doorstep; they all cried if one of them tumbled down, but no one was hurt this morning. He put up his hand by and by and tried to pull Nelly’s head down to his: ‘Sissy,’ he said, ‘Sissy.’—

Nelly took no notice. Then John Henry put both his arms round her neck and said, ‘Sissy, do tell me what you’re crying for, so as I can cry too.’

Then Nelly stopped crying, and said: ‘Oh! you silly boy—why do you want to cry?’

‘‘Cause we always do; you cry when I do,’ said John Henry.

‘Very well then;’ said Nelly ‘you just can’t cry this time, it’s only me that’s got to cry. Teacher said I was old enough to know better, and you weren’t; so there!’

‘Know better’n what?’ said John Henry.

‘Better’n to have my pinny torn, and my face dirty, and to be late to school. I wish I wasn’t old enough to know better;’ and poor little Nelly, remembering all her troubles, began to cry again.

John Henry was just beginning to sob too when someone spoke to the children. They did not know the voice a bit, and they all looked up



quickly. There was a little old lady standing and watching them. She had grey hair and bright black eyes and a nice kind mouth; but, though her eyes and lips were smiling now, they both looked as if she could be rather angry sometimes. She had a black bonnet on her head and wore a short black dress and thick shoes. There were black woollen gloves on her hands, and she carried a black umbrella and had a black bag by her side. Though she was so black all over, the children did not feel a bit afraid of her. She spoke quickly in a clear tone.

'Now children,' she said, 'come, come, what's the matter? Good children mustn't cry.'

'I ain't good,' said Nelly.

'Nonsense, nonsense,' said the little old lady. 'Who says you are not good?'

'Teacher,' said Nelly.

'Well then, tell me what have you been doing? Did you not know your lessons?'

'Yes,' said Nelly, 'I always know my lessons.'

'Well, what's amiss then?'

'There's a hole in my pinny,' said Nelly.

'So there is—dear, dear,' said the old lady.

'And my face is dirty, and John Henry's is worse. Only John Henry, he can't wash his own face.'

'Time he learned,' said the old lady.

'And we were late to school this morning,' said Nelly.

'That's bad, that's bad,' said the old lady, 'why were you late?'

'We're always late of a Monday,' said Nelly.

'Worse and worse,' said the old lady. 'I'm quite shocked.'

But all the time her eyes twinkled so brightly and her lips smiled so pleasantly that Nelly did not feel a bit afraid; she went on:

'Teacher said I ought to know better.'

'So you ought,' said the old lady. 'How old are you?'

'Going in nine,' said Nelly.

'Yes, yes, why don't you know better? Where's your mother?'

'Mother's at work.'

'I see, I see. She can't teach you better. Well, I think I shall come and teach you.'

'You,' said Nelly and John Henry together, their eyes growing round with astonishment.

'Yes, I; I am an out-of-school teacher—just as your teacher is an in-school teacher, and my business is to help little people to help themselves. If you mind what I say, I will soon teach you to know better. See, here's mother coming. Dry up your tears and wash your face, and be good this afternoon, and very soon I shall come and give you your first lesson.'

And, as their mother came up to the door, the old lady trotted off, very fast, down the street, leaving the children much too excited to think of crying or of doing anything else, but telling their mother what had happened.

## CHAPTER II.

As they went to school that afternoon Nelly and John Henry talked about nothing but the little old lady and the lessons she was to give them. Nelly's teacher saw that she had been crying and was very gentle to her, and told her that she looked much nicer with her face washed. After school Nelly hurried home as fast as little Eliza could go, making all sorts of good plans about being very tidy.

When the children ran in at the cottage door, there sat the little old lady talking to their mother! Nelly stopped short and began to play with the corner of her pinafore. John Henry slipped round the room to his mother's side, and got behind her arm. Little Eliza ran boldly forward and climbed upon her mother's knee, and sat there, quietly sucking her dirty little thumb.

The kitchen was terribly untidy; the table still had on it the dishes and cups the children had used at dinner. Nelly's Sunday hat was on a chair behind the door. One of John Henry's best boots was under the table, and the other was under the settle. All the chairs wanted dusting, and the floor was all over crumbs. There were *three* saucers on the floor, because, every time Nelly had given pussy some milk, she had put down a fresh saucer for her. Pussy was the only clean and tidy thing in the room; she sat in front of the fire, licking her fur and watching the children with blinking

eyes. The little old lady and mother were talking very earnestly, but they stopped when Nelly went in.

'Come here,' said the little old lady; 'come here, my dear, and let me give you your first lesson.'

Nelly came forward and stood in front of the fire, between the old lady and her mother. Mother sat back in her chair, and looked on.

'Now then,' said the old lady, very quickly and clearly, 'put your heels together, hands by your sides, head up. Look at me.'

Nelly did just as she was told. The old lady went on: 'Say after me: the name of my first lesson is work.'

Nelly repeated the words. John Henry came and stood by her side and repeated them too: 'The name of my first lesson is work.'

'Now,' said the old lady, 'what is the name of your first lesson?'

'Work,' said Nelly and John Henry together. But Nelly looked so puzzled that the old lady said: 'Well, what are you thinking?'

'I'm thinking,' said Nelly, 'I'm too small to go to work. People don't go to work when they are at school.'

'Of course, of course,' said the old lady. 'You don't go to work; work comes to you. Never mind; you'll understand directly. Now say: I must do my own work.'

'I must do my own work,' said Nelly and John Henry. They began to think it was like a game.

'My work is to help mother,' said the old lady.

'My work is to help mother,' said the children.

'I must get myself up in the morning,' said the old lady.

'I must get myself up in the morning,' said Nelly.

'I can't do that,' said John Henry.

'Never mind,' said the old lady.

'Nelly can. Nelly is a very clever girl, I know. But, Nelly, you cannot get up early unless you go to bed early. Say: I must put myself to bed early every night.'

Nelly said it.

'I don't like going to bed,' said John Henry.

'That can't be helped,' said the old lady. 'Boys cannot have everything just as they like. Now Nelly: I must wash myself and John Henry, and Eliza.'

Nelly did not speak.

'Well?' said the old lady,

'I am afraid John Henry won't stand still to be washed.'

'Oh, yes; he will; he must. Come, say it, Nelly.'

Nelly repeated the words. John Henry was fidgetting; he was not sure he wanted to be washed.'

'Now,' said the old lady, 'I must keep the kitchen and bedroom tidy.'

'I must keep the kitchen and bedroom tidy,' said Nelly.

'That's enough for one day. It's no use talking unless we do something. Now, Nelly, go to work and put the kitchen tidy.'

Nelly looked quite puzzled. She did not know where to begin.

'Take all the pots off the table into

the back kitchen,' said the old lady. Not too many at once; just a few at a time.'

While Nelly was doing this, her mother looked at her rather sadly, and said: 'It seems a shame to let her do such things, such a mite as she is.'

'Not a bit! not a bit!' said the old lady, pleasantly. 'You'll see; she'll be all the happier. Why, she lifts heavier things than those every day when she's playing.'

When Nelly had cleared the table, the old lady said: 'Now wash the things up. Mother will give you some warm water. John Henry, take those three saucers off the floor and give them to sister.'

John Henry solemnly did what he was told; and mother took the kettle and put some hot water in a pan, and gave Nelly a stool to stand on and a cloth to dry with. The old lady stood at the back kitchen door and told Nelly how to wash the things and wipe them, and in a few minutes there was a nice pile of clean dishes and plates and cups and saucers; instead of dirty ones, and little Nelly was looking rather hot and very proud of herself.

'Very good,' said the old lady. 'Now, come back here. Whose hat is that?'

Nelly caught up the hat, and ran upstairs with it in a minute. As she came down, she met John Henry stumping upstairs as fast as his fat little legs would carry him, holding a boot in each hand. With a few minutes more tidying, the kitchen

looked nicer than it had done for ever so long, and Nelly thought she had finished. But, no; the old lady said: 'Now, Nelly, dust the table, and the dresser, and all the chairs.'

'I've no duster,' said Nelly, and her mother added: 'I am sure I do not know where to put my hand on one.'

Then the old lady opened her black bag and took out a beautiful, soft, red and blue duster, and said: 'I will give you this duster, Nelly, for your very own, on condition that you use it. When I come to give you your next lesson I shall know whether you have been using it or not.'

Nelly's eyes danced with pleasure. It is so nice to have things of your very own, and she had such a few things, because, you see, her mother was poor and could not buy things for her; and when Nelly had a penny, as I told you, she spent it on sweets, and, of course, they were gone directly. The old lady watched Nelly dust the kitchen, and then she said, looking at her very, very kindly: 'Well, now, are you tired?'

'No, not a bit,' said Nelly, sturdily; 'but I am very hungry.'

'Just in time, too,' said her mother, cheerily. 'See, tea is ready.'

Sure enough, she had been getting tea while Nelly did her work.

'Wash your hands and face,' said the old lady. 'Tea will taste very good. But, first, tell me what is the name of your first lesson? Heels together—head up—hands by your side. Look at me!'

'The name of my first lesson is Work,' said Nelly.

'Right,' said the old lady, and in two minutes she had trotted out of sight down the street, leaving a very happy and much excited little girl behind her.

### CHAPTER III.

After tea Nelly was still full of good resolutions about her work. She wanted very much to please the little old lady. 'Was she not a funny old lady, mother?' said she. 'And didn't she give me a funny lesson? I like that lesson, though; it is very interesting.'

'I am sure she has given *me* a lesson,' said her mother. 'Try to mind what the old lady says, dearie, and you'll be ever such a comfort to mother. What are you going to do now?'

'I want to mend my pinny,' said Nelly, 'if I could find a needle and cotton.'

'I will try to find you one,' said her mother. 'But, look! there's your grand new duster lying on the floor, and your school-hat and John Henry's cap, and little Eliza's bonnet, all in a heap on that chair behind the door. Hang them on the nails. Nelly, I declare, child, you and I must put our backs into it if we are to be tidy folk. I believe it'll be best to move that chair. It's wonderful how everything gets on to it.'

Nelly did as she was told rather soberly. It is not quite so interesting to be tidy and do one's work in a



common kind of way, with no one to watch, as it is when there is a nice, funny old lady making a kind of a game of it.

Then mother found her, with some difficulty, a needle and cotton, and she sat down on a little wooden stool outside the door and began to mend her pinafore. She had learned to use a needle at school, but not to do very much with it yet, and I am afraid her mending was rather a boggle. Still, she tried and tried, and any mending is better than a hole. Mother was sweeping the kitchen meantime, and John Henry and Eliza were playing in the street, getting blacker and blacker. When Nelly had mended the hole in her pinafore, she sat watching John Henry and thinking she would like to try her hand on his knickerbockers, only she thought, perhaps, white cotton would not look well on brown cloth. She had just made up her mind to try, 'because,' as she said to herself, 'the white stitches will soon be black, and then they will not show,' when her mother came to the door and called the other children, and told them to come in and go to bed.

'Oh, mother!' said Nelly; 'not yet. It is quite light. I shall never go to sleep, and I do so want to mend John Henry's knickerbockers.'

'You shall mend his knickerbockers to-morrow,' said her mother; 'but you must go to bed now. You and I must both remember the old lady's lesson. Besides, I want to bathe you all to-night, and wash your heads, and I am

rather tired, Nelly. I want to get you all out of the way and go to bed myself.'

Nelly looked up at her mother's face and saw that she did look very pale and tired.

'I'm sorry, mother,' said she. 'It is too bad you should have to work all day and all the evening too.'

Mother looked down and kissed her, and she ran off and fetched John Henry and Eliza. Little Eliza was heavy, and cross with sleepiness, and that made her want not to go to bed. Nelly had to drag her in,—she would not lift her feet, and she hung back and cried.

'Now, Nelly,' said mother, 'you shall wipe Eliza dry while I wash John Henry.'

The washing-tub was in front of the fire with some nice warm water in it. When Eliza felt the pleasant softness of the water all about her body she stopped crying. She was very black and grubby. It was so pretty to see the dirt come off and her fat little arms show shining white in the fire-light. When it came to her head's turn to be washed it was such a tangled, frowzy mass of hair that her mother did not know how to begin upon it. Then Nelly had a happy thought.

'Suppose, mother,' said she, 'you just take a pair of scissors and cut it all off.'

'I declare I will, Nelly,' said her mother. 'And yours too. It will soon grow again and then we can keep it in order, and you'll never miss it this hot weather.'

No sooner said than done. Mother got her scissors and 'snip, snip' they went all over Eliza's curly head. Nelly thought she looked funny when it was done, but the baby-girl laughed with delight and said, 'nice-nice.'

When Eliza was quite clean, mother stood her down in front of the fire and Nelly dried her very carefully, going into all the corners.

By the time John Henry was ready to be dried Eliza was ready for bed, and mother carried her upstairs and put her down and tucked her up, and in five minutes she was sound asleep.

John Henry's hair was short already but Nelly's was very long and tangled. Mother's face grew rather grave as she handled it. 'I ought never to have let it get in such a state,' she said sadly.

'It's not your fault, mother,' said Nelly, stoutly. 'It's my own. I'm old enough to know better. Teacher said so. And I will know better now.'

'I've been so taken up, getting you enough to eat. I let everything else go,' said her mother. 'I had pretty hair when I was a little girl, Nelly.'

'Never you mind, mother,' said Nelly. 'You take and cut it right off. It'll grow again, won't it?' she added, half afraid.

'Oh, yes, it will grow again,' said her mother.

'Very well then; when it grows again I'll take care of it myself.'

So 'snip, snip' went the scissors again, and then Nelly had her bath and went to bed and to sleep before she had time to do more than re-

member that she must get up early to-morrow.

Quite early next morning mother woke Nelly from a sound sleep and said, 'Jump up, Nelly, remember what the old lady said.'

For a few minutes Nelly could not remember. Her only thought was that something had happened, and that it was something very pleasant. Then she felt that all the sleep rolled away from her mind, like a little curtain being lifted and letting in the light; and, all at once, she knew all about what had happened and jumped out of bed, singing to herself over and over again, 'I must do my own work, I must do my own work.'

She made such a noise that it was quite surprising that she did not wake John Henry and Eliza, but they slept on soundly; and when she was quite ready herself she went and stood by John Henry and began tugging at his arm.

'Get up, lazy boy,' she cried, 'get up. Don't you remember the old lady? Don't you remember that we must do our work?'

John Henry opened his sleepy blue eyes and then turned away and buried his face again in the pillow. But Nelly pulled at him until she made him sit up.

'Get up and do your work,' said she. 'Get out of bed directly. What will the old lady say?'

'Don't care,' said John Henry, sulkily. 'Haven't got any work. I'se only a little boy.'

'Yes; you have got work,' said Nelly, severely; and then, as she saw his face all twitching up ready for a good scream (and John Henry *could* scream when he liked), 'Oh! don't cry, John Henry, I've thought of some beautiful work for you to do, quite nice and very easy. You'll like it ever so.'

'What is it?' asked John Henry, curiously, with one stocking in his hand.

'I'll tell you when you're dressed. You can't do work with no clothes on, you know. And you must be dressed before Eliza. You see, she's only a baby, and you're big, nearly as big as me.'

'So I are,' said John Henry. He liked to think he was big. So he got dressed with a good deal of help from Nelly. But there was trouble again about washing his face.

'It was washed last night,' said he.

'Oh! dear,' said Nelly, 'we can't make one washing do for always. Do be good, John Henry. I do so want for us to manage without calling mother; and there's all Eliza to do yet.'

'Well,' said John Henry, and he screwed up his eyes tight and let Nelly do her best to make him clean. When she had finished she stepped a little way back from him and looked at him all over.

'Well,' she said, 'you do look pretty.'

'Tell me my work now,' said John Henry.

'Well—if I do, will you promise not to mess yourself all up?'

'Yes,' said John Henry.

'Then go down into the backyard and pick up all the bits of paper and rubbish and see how big a pile you can make.'

John Henry stumped away and tumbled down the two bottom steps. But Nelly did not trouble to go and pick him up. He tumbled down several times every day, and was used to it. Besides, mother was in the kitchen getting breakfast, and she came out and gave her boy a big kiss and made him quite happy again.

It was quite a long business for Nelly to get little Eliza's clothes put on. The baby-girl would not stand still. She sat down plump, just when Nelly was going to tie her petticoat strings. She ran round the room with one shoe off and one shoe on. She crept under the bed, squealing with laughter and Nelly had to drag her out by one foot. Poor Nelly, her *patience* very nearly came to an end more than once. Mother, at work downstairs, stopped to listen, but she had promised the old lady to let Nelly try, and so she did not go upstairs. She never once heard Nelly speak crossly. Eliza was only a baby, and Nelly knew it, and was very fond of her too. So she kept on trying again and again. She was a very sensible, brave little girl, and very *persevering*. When she had made up her mind that she ought to do a thing she did not give up just because there were difficulties in the way. So it happened that just as mother said breakfast was ready, Nelly came into the kitchen

holding little Eliza by the hand. Mother looked so pleased.

‘Eh! Nelly child,’ she said, ‘I am proud of you. You are just the best little girl that ever was.’

‘Me best girl, too,’ said Eliza; and her mother lifted her into a chair and they all had breakfast.

#### CHAPTER IV.

Nelly went to school in very good time that day. She and John Henry and Eliza were quite *punctual*. You see, as they had gone to bed in good time, they had got up in good time, and so they got dressed in time, and had plenty of time to eat their breakfasts and to be in their places at school before their teachers even began to call over the names. When Nelly’s teacher called her name, she looked at her, and when she saw her clean face and tidy hair and mended pinafore, she smiled and seemed very much pleased. Nelly’s cheeks grew hot with pleasure. Before the lesson began, teacher came and spoke to her.

‘Who mended your pinafore, Nelly?’ said she.

‘I mended it myself,’ said Nelly, proudly. ‘Oh! teacher,’—a sudden thought had come into her head.

‘Well!’ said teacher, kindly.

‘I do so want to mend John Henry’s knicker-bockers, and we have no thread, only white in our house.’

Then Nelly hung down her head and turned redder than ever. She thought, perhaps, she ought not to ask her teacher for thread. But then

she knew teacher had a great many cottons of different colours and she thought, maybe she would give her some.

Teacher said, ‘Wait and speak to me after school, Nelly.’

‘Who cut your hair?’

‘Mother did,’ said Nelly. ‘There was an old lady——’

But then teacher said: ‘I can’t stop to listen now, Nelly, you shall tell me after school. Be a good girl this morning.’

Then she hurried away to see about something else, and Nelly did all her lessons as well as ever she could. She was feeling happy, and it is so easy to be good when we are happy. After school she went and fetched John Henry and Eliza from the Infant school, and then stood by teacher’s desk until teacher was ready to speak to her. Teacher was sitting with a little box in front of her. She was putting things into the box. Nelly watched her. It was a pretty little box of white wood, with a picture on the top. Teacher put in a reel of black cotton and a reel of white and some white linen buttons and a knot of tape and a bodkin. Then she stuck some needles into a little needle-book made of red flannel and put that in too. Then she added a small pair of scissors and a little thimble. Then she shut the box. It fastened with a snap, and teacher looked up and saw Nelly waiting.

‘Come here, dear,’ said she. ‘Now tell me all about the old lady.’



Nelly told her, and teacher listened and was very much interested.

'You must be sure and do everything the old lady tells you, Nelly,' said she. 'Then you will really be some use in the world. You are big enough to be some use now, though you are only a little girl.'

'Yes,' said Nelly. 'I dressed John Henry and Eliza all myself, and I washed up the pots and mended my pinny.'

'So you did,' said teacher, kindly. 'And you want to mend John Henry's knicker-bockers. How did you tear them so, John Henry?'

'I satted down on a nail,' said John Henry, 'and when I got up again, it caught.'

'Well, Nelly,' said teacher, 'did you see what I put into this box?'

'Yes, ma'am,' said Nelly.

'I think,' said teacher, 'little girls who want to mend clothes, must have some things to sew with. I shall give you this box, Nelly, because you are trying to be a good, tidy girl.'

'Do you mean give it *me*? For *my* very own, ma'am?' said Nelly.

'Yes,' said teacher, 'for your very own.'

Nelly's eyes shone with pleasure. She could hardly speak to say thank you. But she did say: 'Thank you, ma'am,' and I do not think her teacher wanted her to say any more. It was easy to see how pleased the little girl was.

Holding the precious box tight with one hand, and little Eliza with the other, she hurried home. She tried

to mend John Henry's knickerbockers as they waited on the doorstep, but the fat little boy would not keep still. To be sure it was not very comfortable for him, because the tear was right behind. When mother came home she found him on his hands and knees, squealing because Nelly had pricked him with her needle, and Nelly holding on to him with one hand and trying to sew up the hole with the other. She told Nelly she might sit up half-an-hour after John Henry had gone to bed and mend the tear then. That seemed a much better plan.

Nelly did not forget to wash up the dinner things and dust the kitchen before she went back to school. She was afraid the old lady might come and find the kitchen untidy again. She looked all about to see if everything was in its place, and John Henry did the same, because he always wanted to do what Nelly did. Of course, he was not much use, but it was better to have him trying to make things tidy than to make them untidy. Then mother drew her shawl around her, and after she had locked the door, she stooped to kiss her little ones.

'Oh! mother,' said Nelly, 'you do look nice.'

'I'm bound to make myself look nice,' said mother, 'with such a tidy little daughter.'

The fact was she had tidied herself a great deal more than usual that she might 'set a good example to Nelly.'

The old lady did not come that afternoon, but the beautiful work-box made Nelly quite happy enough for one day. She mended John Henry's knickerbockers, chattering to her mother all the time, and making great plans about all the wonderful things she would do when she was a big girl. She went to bed early and got up in good time, feeling as though she could never do anything naughty any more.

Poor little Nelly! Boys and girls do not grow quite good all at once, any more than little seeds grow all at once to be big plants.

I must tell you now what happened to Nelly on a most unhappy day.

Everything went very nicely in the morning; but in the afternoon, as they were going to school, John Henry began picking up stones and throwing them. He threw them at carts and at dogs and horses. Nelly said 'don't' several times, because teacher had told them they must not throw stones. But she did not really try to make John Henry leave off. She did not think it mattered, because he could not throw straight, and never hit anything he was throwing at. But sometimes he hit things he was not throwing at, and, just as they got near to the school, he threw a big stone with all his might, and crash! it went right through one of the school windows. Oh, dear! The children were so frightened. John Henry held on to Nelly's skirts and

sobbed aloud. Nelly was very white—she looked up and down to see who was watching them. She did not think anyone had seen John Henry throw the stone. Then she stooped down and shook the little boy.

'Hush crying,' she said.

'Oh! Nelly,' he said, 'you'll not tell on me. You'll not tell on me, Nelly!'

'Of course not,' said Nelly. 'Do I ever tell on you, John Henry?'

'But if the policeman comes?' cried John Henry in an agony of fear.

'He shan't get you,' said Nelly, 'I promise. Only do hush crying. Everybody'll know it's us, if you go on so. Oh! dear-dear! Here's Eliza beginning now. Eliza, if you cry, I'll—I'll slap you, so there!'

I think Eliza did not believe that her sister would slap her, but she was so surprised that Nelly, who was, generally, very kind and gentle, should speak crossly to her, that she did stop crying, and the three children crept quietly and timidly into the schoolroom. They found the teacher in the infant school looking very sadly at a great mess of broken glass and water.

'See, children,' said she, 'some one has thrown a stone right through the window and smashed our beautiful globe of gold fish.'

Some of the little boys and girls were saying: 'What a pity,' and 'What a shame!' But our three children never said a word.

Nelly's teacher came into the room

and said a few words to the other teacher. Nelly thought she looked rather stern. Then Nelly's teacher said: 'Does any boy or girl here know who threw the stone?'

Nelly had made up her mind not to cry, but she felt dreadfully uncomfortable, and John Henry sobbed aloud, but no one answered the teacher. So then she turned to Nelly and said: 'Why is John Henry crying?'

'He tumbled down,' answered Nelly quickly.

Then Nelly's teacher looked very sad and sorry, but she only said: 'Come into class now, Nelly.'

Poor little Nelly! I cannot tell you how terribly unhappy she was all that afternoon. She knew, as well as you do, how wrong it is to tell a lie. That feeling we have in our hearts, which pulls us away from doing wrong, and which is sometimes called *conscience*, made her want to go to her teacher and tell the *truth*. But she fought against that feeling, and kept on saying to herself, over and over again, 'I can't tell on John Henry, I can't.'

#### CHAPTER V.

The afternoon seemed to creep away, it went so slowly, but it came to an end at last. When Nelly marched out of the room with the other children, she dared not lift her eyes as she passed her teacher's desk. She did not speak to John Henry and Eliza

as they went home. John Henry, too, was very quiet. He pressed very close to Nelly's side once when he saw a policeman. You see he was a very little boy, and he was unhappy because he was afraid he would be punished; but Nelly was unhappy because she knew she had done wrong. They were both thinking so much about the broken window, that they forgot all about the little old lady, and it was quite a surprise to them when they saw her sitting in the kitchen and talking to their mother. Nelly stopped short in the doorway and stood looking at the floor. She felt as if her heart would break. Here was her own dear old lady who had given her the beautiful duster and taught her such a pleasant lesson. She would not have done that, thought Nelly, if she had known what a wicked little girl she was helping. She would not have taught a liar to keep the kitchen clean. The thoughts went through Nelly's mind so quickly and she felt so much ashamed, she could not go in and say 'good afternoon.'

The old lady thought she was shy and said: 'Come, Nelly, I am very much pleased by what your mother tells me, and now I am ready to give you another lesson.'

Still Nelly did not move and mother said: 'Why, Nelly, where are your manners? Come and speak to the lady.'

I do not know what Nelly would have done, but just then another per-

son came to the door. Nelly looked up and saw that it was her teacher.

'May I come in,' said teacher, 'I have something to tell you.'

Then Nelly stood on one side and hid her face in her hands. All in a moment she felt quite sure that teacher knew all about it. John Henry and Eliza ran out into the street again, but Nelly stood by the door, with her head against the wall and could not look at anybody. But, though she turned her back on mother and teacher and the old lady, and though she kept her face covered up, she heard every word that was said, and she felt more miserable than she had ever done in her life.

Mother asked the teacher to sit down. Then Nelly remembered how clean the kitchen was, and how proud she would have been to have teacher see it if she had not told that lie. 'What's the use,' thought she, 'for girls to keep things clean, and then to tell lies?' Then she thought of her beautiful little workbox. 'I must give it back,' thought she, 'teacher never meant to give it to a bad girl. But—I couldn't—tell on John Henry—I couldn't.'

She heard the teacher say: 'I have something to tell you, Mrs. Smith. I am sorry to say Nelly and John Henry have been naughty to-day.'

'Ah! I'm sorry for that,' said mother anxiously.

'It was this way,' said teacher. 'As I was shutting my window this afternoon, I looked out and saw Nelly,

and John Henry, and Eliza, coming to school. John Henry was throwing stones, and he threw one right through the Infant school window.'

When Nelly heard that a new thought came into her mind, and it was such a horrid thought, it made her forget all about being ashamed. She thought, perhaps, John Henry would be put in prison. She ran to her teacher and said:

'Oh! teacher, will the police get him? Oh! don't tell on him, teacher. He's such a little boy, and he did not mean to do it. It was my fault too, I ought to have made him leave off—only he don't generally hit anything, however much he throws.'

Then poor Nelly broke down and cried and cried and cried. In a minute she felt a kind arm put round her, and a kind hand was wiping her eyes with a very soft handkerchief. She could smell that the handkerchief had something sweet on it. A gentle voice said:

'Hush, hush, my little Nelly. Don't cry so. The police don't take small boys like your John Henry. No one shall hurt John Henry.'

When Nelly could stop crying a little bit, she found herself sitting on the old lady's knee. She looked at her mother and saw that there were tears in her eyes. Then she slipped down and went across to her mother.

'Oh! mother,' said she, 'don't cry. I'll never do it again.'

'We don't know yet what Nelly did,' said the old lady.



'Tell it yourself, Nelly,' said teacher.

'I told a lie,' said Nelly. 'I said John Henry was crying because he tumbled down.'

She spoke very low at first, and then she said, louder:

'But I couldn't, I couldn't tell on John Henry.'

There was silence for a minute, and then the old lady said: 'Go and bring John Henry here, my dear.'

Nelly went and found the little boy, and as she brought him in, she told him that teacher knew all about it, and that the police would not get him. I am afraid John Henry cared more about that than about having done wrong. He stood before the old lady and his mother and the teacher, and did not look at all unhappy. He was only a very dirty, fat little boy, with red cheeks, looking rather grave because everybody else was grave.

'John Henry,' said the old lady, 'who broke the window?'

'I did,' said John Henry.

'Then why did you not tell about it?'

'Cause I was afraid,' said John Henry.

'Then you were a coward,' said the old lady. 'And I am ashamed of you. I don't like cowards. I like brave boys. You are a naughty boy, John Henry.'

John Henry's lip began to shake, and he held Nelly's hand tightly. Then the old lady said:

'Now Nelly and John Henry, listen to me. This must be a very serious lesson to you both. You must never, never tell a lie again. You are old

enough to know that truth is one of God's laws, and that it is a law which you must never break. All sorts of troubles come into people's lives from telling lies. When you are older I will tell you some of the ways in which they come. But now I will tell you only one: if boys and girls tell lies, those who know them, their mother and their teacher and their friends, cannot trust them. They cannot feel sure about them in any way. Those boys and girls are no good in the world. We should be willing to bear any pain or any punishment rather than tell a lie. I am sure Nelly feels that in her heart, don't you, Nelly?'

'Yes ma'am,' said Nelly.

'You wanted to save John Henry from being punished, did you not?'

'Yes, ma'am,' said Nelly again.

'But then, you see, even if you did save him, you would be doing harm. It would be good for John Henry to be punished a little. It would make him mind and not throw stones again.'

'John Henry,' said mother, 'will be put to bed as soon as he has had his tea.'

Then John Henry began to cry, very loud indeed, and mother said:

'If John Henry makes that noise, he must be put to bed now.'

So she picked him up and carried him upstairs, and there was an end of John Henry for that day. The old lady got up to go and said:

'Nelly, you have had your lesson to-day. You will remember now,

won't you, my child, always to tell the truth?'

'Yes, ma'am,' said Nelly, sadly. Now she was not afraid about John Henry any more, she was feeling very much ashamed again. Then the old lady went, and Nelly and her teacher were left alone together. Teacher said good-bye and was going too, when Nelly said:

'Please teacher.'

'Yes, dear,' said teacher very kindly.

'Please, there's the work-box.'

'Yes,' said teacher, looking rather puzzled.

'Shall I bring it in the morning?'

'Why, no,' said teacher, 'I gave it to you for your very own.'

'But I was a good girl then,' said Nelly.

'And you are a good girl again now,' said teacher. 'I am sure you will never tell a lie again. Be brave and true and honest, little Nelly. You *are* kind and persevering and industrious. You will be my best scholar, I know, one of these days.'

I think teacher knew little Nelly's heart felt sore, and so she said that to make her feel better. Nelly did feel better. She said to herself, 'I will try—oh! I will try, very hard.'

Then she began to put the tea-things on the table. MARY DENDY.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Here, for the present, we take leave of our little friends; but we have received a half promise from Miss Dendy that she will tell us more about them in the future, so we shall look forward to hearing more about them soon.

## What is Religion?

**A remembrance of the address, given at the aggregate meeting of elder scholars of our London Sunday School Society, by the Rev. J. J. Wright.**

The following is an attempt to reproduce from memory the main points of a beautiful address which, given extempore, could not be exactly reproduced. There is no attempt to report the *words*, for that would not have been possible; but if I have at all succeeded in producing an 'echo' of the spirit which pervaded it, I feel sure that parents and teachers will be glad to have it brought before them.—M.P.



MY text is both easy and short. I will not trouble you with the chapter and verse; but for those who want to find it I will say that it will be found in the Bible, and is the first word of one of the chapters in the Book of Isaiah. It is this:

'LISTEN.'

If we visit the beautiful lakes of Killarney, in Ireland, we shall see that our guide carries with him a horn. At a certain point he stops and, putting his mouth to it, he blows a deep, strong blast. The sound is gradually borne away, and we turn to go, but he detains us; 'Wait,' he says; 'Listen.' Then presently, from the craggy mountains round, the sound returns to us again and again, echoed a dozen times from the rocks and hills which gather about the beautiful lakes. Sound an-

swers to sound; how wonderful, how mysterious it seems!

You have all, I dare say, heard an echo somewhere, and perhaps a few may have been in the dome of St. Paul's, in the whispering gallery; where, by putting your ear to the wall, the merest whisper is brought to you from the opposite side—some hundred feet away. Truly it is very wonderful.

But listen again. On the banks of the Adriatic Sea live a number of poor fishermen. They put off in their boats and row away out of sight of the shore; and there they will remain all the night through, intent on their fishing. When the evening sets in you may see the wives come down to the beach. Why are they there? Look they never so eagerly they cannot catch sight of their husbands; the little fishing crafts are far too distant. Ah, they know that perfectly well; but listen! do you hear them? they are bending their faces towards the water, and they sing together the first verse of their sweet evening hymn. They cease and wait,—wait patiently for a minute or two; and then across the wide waters steals the sound of singing; it is their husbands' voices taking up the strain and continuing with the second verse of the hymn. In some mysterious way the waters have the power of bearing sounds along on their surface for very long distances.

And so we have heart answering heart, as sound answers to sound; the wives return happy, knowing that all is well with their husbands; and their

husbands feel that they are still in loving touch with their wives, though out of reach and out of sight.

Now I think that thoughts such as these may help us to understand something of the meaning of Religion. God is a Spirit; we, too, are spirit; that which unites Spirit with Spirit is what we call *Religion*.

Does this seem difficult to understand? Let me tell you yet another incident which may help to make the thought clearer.

Many years ago, in 1831, there was great stir and excitement in one of the auction rooms in London. It was announced that a violin would be sold which had been made by Antonio Stradivari more than a hundred years before.<sup>1</sup> The room was crowded and, as the auctioneer took the old brown instrument out of its case, as tenderly as though it was a baby out of its cradle, all eyes were fixed upon him. Could it indeed be one made by the great master of violin makers? The instrument was handed to a musician whom the auctioneer had asked to come on purpose to show its virtue. But alas! the player failed to produce any wonderful tones; and the buyers shook their heads, 'That is not a Cremona violin,' they said. The bidding began; one pound, two, three; then there came a pause; and the

<sup>1</sup> A man who has been described by George Eliot as—

'That plain, white-aproned man who stood at work Patient and accurate full fourscore years,  
Cherished his sight and touch by temperance;  
And since keen sense is love of perfectness,  
Made perfect violins.'

auctioneer indignantly remonstrated. But the bidding went very slowly and, in spite of all his efforts, at ten pounds there was a full stop. Must the instrument go at that? He began to think that no higher price would be offered, when his eye caught sight of a shabby looking old man who just then had entered the room and was now making his way up to the table. An eager look was on his face as he came close to the violin; and his hand seemed to be unconsciously drawn towards it; he seized the old brown instrument with almost feverish haste, and turned his back upon the people; no eyes might watch him as he examined the master's work; then turning, he faced the audience and played an air on his favourite G string.

There was no doubt now; a master's hand played on a master's instrument, and the flood of melody which filled the room seemed to enter the very souls of the hearers.

The music ended, there was no lack of bidders, all eager to possess the rare treasure; but in the end no one could feel that it was other than just that the instrument was taken by the musician who had revealed its value, he who was no other than the much-famed Paganini.

That evening the seats of Covent Garden Theatre were crowded, for it had been said that Paganini would give a performance; and when the world-famed player entered, the old brown instrument was in his hands. From it he drew forth such glorious

tones that the mighty assembly were thrilled as with one accord—heart answered to heart, soul answered to soul.

God is a Spirit; we are Spirit! religion is that which unites spirit with spirit. We cannot always bridge over the space, but if we attune our souls to listen while the Master plays the full chord on the divine instrument of Love, we shall learn to understand the essential meaning of Religion, and shall find our hearts and souls beating in unison with Him.

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### A MELODY OF LOVE.

God speaks to us in bird and song;  
In winds that drift the clouds along;  
Above the din of toil and wrong—  
A melody of love.

God speaks to us in far and near;  
In peace of home and friends most dear;  
From the dim past, and present clear,  
A melody of love.

God speaks to us in darkest night;  
By quiet ways through mornings bright,  
When shadows fall with evening light,  
A melody of love.

God speaks to us in every land,  
On wave-lapped shore and silent strand;  
By kiss of child, and touch of hand,  
A melody of love.

O voice Divine, speak Thou to me!  
Beyond the earth, beyond the sea;  
First let me hear, then sing to Thee  
A melody of love.

—JOSEPH JOHNSON.



## Sin: its Punishment and its Cure.

### I.



THE title of these three lessons has, I confess, a very serious sound. The subject is a serious one—the most serious, I think, that we shall ever meet with. But in this life we cannot help meeting it in some way, so we had better face it at once straightforwardly and manfully. These notes will, I hope, help you to think clearly and truly, and therefore safely, about some things which have long troubled many people, and which will certainly perplex you, unless from the first you escape the false notions that are often taught.

The first thing we have to realise here is the meaning of *Sin*.

In order to do so let us carefully notice the course of daily life. As one day succeeds another, it brings new life in many ways; new opportunities for the use of our various powers of body and of mind; new chances of enjoyment, or, it may be, of pain. It is clear also—especially clear in our youthful days, though it is always so—that we are all *learning*, all placed where we have to try one thing after another and to profit by our experience. If we learn wisely, taking good heed of life's lessons, we may go safely and pleasantly from hour to hour, from task to task, acquiring

fresh skill and added knowledge to help us by and by.

Unhappily, as we all know, it is possible to be unwise, to make mistakes; and then our life does not go on safely and pleasantly, but quite the reverse. Whether you are at school or at play, you are continually meeting with new tests of your powers. These tests are of different kinds. Can you draw that pattern? Can you work that sum, or solve that problem? Can you hit the ball to the boundary, or balance yourself on the edge of your skate? Such are some of the tests. The youth who goes to business meets a different kind of challenge of his ability, and he succeeds or fails according as he meets the test in a satisfactory or unsatisfactory way.

You know well that there is a good deal of difference in the kinds of test that come to you day by day. If a question is put off-hand on some subject that you never studied, your questioner cannot be much surprised if the answer is incorrect; nor have you in such a case any great reason to be ashamed. But you are justly mortified if it turns out that the lesson you had to learn has been neglected, or but slovenly attended to. So if a stranger takes a wrong turn in a town visited for the first time, he may be vexed at the mishap; but he is not to be blamed for it unless in some way he ought to have known better. There is all the difference between an innocent mistake and guiltily going wrong.

The shame of *sinfulness* belongs, we

feel, to cases of going wrong when we knew better. One of the Bible terms for this shameful kind of mistake is 'transgression,' a word that means 'going across' the boundary. When a child consciously disobeys its mother's bidding, when a scholar wilfully breaks the teacher's rule, we feel that the act is so shameful that we can hardly call it by so simple a name as 'mistake.' And yet, if we could see wrong-doing as it really is, we should see it to be the very worst of mistakes. Sometimes men sin 'with their eyes open,' as we say; but really their eyes are half-shut, and they are blind to the shameful character of their conduct. It is these shocking 'mistakes' that are sinful. Whenever anyone goes wrong in his behaviour, when he *ought* to have kept right and knows he ought, then, whatever his outward act may be, he is guilty of *Sin*.

It is a sad, a terrible thing to be thus guilty. Every mistake, even the most innocent, brings some degree of trouble after it; but this brings the worst. If you set the sum down incorrectly, all the working will be wasted labour. If you get into the wrong train, you may be taken miles out of your way, miss your friend, and suffer disappointment. If you sow parsley seed where you meant to have a bed of mignonette, you will get a crop of vexation. It is one of the certainties of life that mistakes *do* make a difference. The world is not made so that it shall be all the same whether we do right or wrong.

And if there is anything else certain it is this—that just as people feel a keener sense of their folly when it is a sin and not an innocent mistake that they have committed, so the punishment of this form of taking the wrong course is far sadder. Outwardly, it might appear at first that the result of a simple mistake is more serious than that of a sin. The boy, for instance, loses the prize if he blunders over one examination question. The loss not only vexes him, but, perhaps, is a great disappointment to his parents. But, what if he has given way to bad thoughts, or told false things about a schoolfellow? Such things may happen, and never come to the teacher's or the parents' knowledge; and then the boy might think the bad thing had no results at all. But he forgets that things grow within our minds, as well as things in the garden; and if seeds are a long time in showing above ground, their nature is not changed. Whatever is sown in the mind will spring up to its proper fruit—if good, to good fruit; if evil, then most certainly to evil fruit.

The hour when the sin is committed is not always the time when the keenest sense of its shamefulness and harm is felt. Far more frequently the half-shut eyes of the transgressor have to be opened wide by bitter results before he fully perceives how wrong his conduct has been; and sometimes only the contrast between his own guiltiness and the nobleness of a pure and upright soul brought near to him will,

for the first time, startle the slumbering conscience, and bring the sinner to a sense of his degradation. We read in the Gospel that the penitent tax-gatherer would not lift up his eyes unto heaven; he dared not: the thought of God's righteousness made him feel the miserableness of his sinful condition. When a lad has dishonoured the name he bears, how can he look up frankly into the face of that always upright and honourable father at home?

The dread word 'Remorse' gives, to all who understand its inner meaning, a picture of what goes on in the heart that has come to feel its wickedness. The word means 'a biting back' into one's nature; as if one had cherished a snake in his bosom, and the creature had roused only to attack him. Who can wonder that, when the stings of conscience have been thus deeply felt, the guilty soul has cried aloud for mercy? 'Is there no help? Can this terror be removed from the breast, and life go on peacefully and blessedly as before? Or must the sinner pay this awful penalty of his sin now, as an earnest of still more awful consequences in the life to come?'

Such are the piteous thoughts that tear the hearts of men when they come to a full sense of their shame as wilful offenders against the law of Right which the righteous God has written in their very nature. How deeply they have felt their degradation and ill-deserving we may tell from the vivid pictures of 'punishment to come'

which Christians, as well as others in different parts of the world's history, have imagined. Around us to-day there are many who shrink under the awfulness of such pictures of coming doom. And well might all shrink, even unto despair, if it could be true, as has been commonly taught, that God will burn guilty souls for ever in hell-fire, with no hope of relief, or of amendment, however long they suffer, or however sorry they may become that their earthly days were mis-spent.

We do not believe it to be true. The punishment of sin we believe—and, alas! we know—to be severe; and for all who are impenitent and hardened in wickedness we cannot but expect a terrible awakening, and a fearful harvest of evil sowing. And yet, since we believe in God as a good and wise Father, we believe all that He does to his children, even to the worst, will be good and wise, and will always tend to bring them at last to goodness and wisdom like His own.

But, before we think further on the cure of Sin, we must turn to some Bible thoughts on the subject of Sin and its Punishment; for, unless we learn how to think aright of some expressions to be found in our Bibles, they will stand in our way, as they do to many Christian people, as hindrances to a truly saving faith in the love of God.

## II.

The Bible writings, as a whole, are the most precious religious literature in the world. This we may very sin-

cerely hold while we open our eyes to the fact that a collection of writings produced in ages far remote will present many features strange to us, and not improbably some that will repel us. Our aim in using the Bible should be to share the intense love of righteousness and of faith in God which its writers felt, and not to force ourselves into all their ways of thinking as if they were of equal value for us. This should be kept in mind by those who are not able yet to examine very closely what was actually written and meant, and who are troubled by verses and expressions that cannot be harmonised with God's wisdom and goodness.

But it should be our aim to learn accurately as far as we can, and the very first step to accurate knowledge of the Scriptures is to remember that our English Bible is a translation—from the Hebrew language in the case of the Old Testament, and from the Greek in the case of the New. In the course of time scholars have observed that the older English translation, which is still chiefly in use, is in many points incorrect. A few years ago, therefore, a new translation, which is known as the Revised Version, was made for all who desire a more correct form of the Scriptures.

The importance of this fact is seen as soon as we inquire what the Bible actually says about the punishment of sin in the life to come, and especially what it says about 'Hell.' This word occurs a good many times in the older version; but the modern revisers have

found that the word should be very seldom used, if ever, in our Scriptures. The Hebrew word which was formerly translated 'Hell' in the Old Testament is 'Sheol,' and it meant simply the abode of departed spirits of men, both good and bad. The ancient Hebrews had gloomy ideas of the after-life, and thought of it as a shadowy realm to be contrasted with the life and glow of mortal existence. Except in the prophetic books the translation 'hell' has been rejected, and some such words as 'the pit,' 'grave,' have been put in its place; while, where it has been kept, the margin tells us that it is the same word 'Sheol' which is in the Hebrew. The American revisers leave the word untranslated everywhere, and certainly it has no connection with the 'hell-fire' which some Christians speak of.

But it is when we turn to the New Testament and look closely at the Greek words which have been translated 'hell' that we come to the passages which have most hindered people from a faith in the perfect love of God.

There are no less than three words in the New Testament which have been translated 'hell,' viz., 'Tartarus,' 'Hades,' and 'Gehenna.' The first of these is found only once—in the second epistle of 'Peter,' as it is called, though it was probably written by some unknown person long after the time of the Apostle. Whoever he was, the author, speaking of the 'angels when they sinned,' says they were cast down to 'Tartarus,' there to be kept 'unto



judgment.' He argues that in like manner the unrighteous will be kept under punishment 'unto the day of judgment.' Thus, whatever value his teaching on the point may be, he is clearly speaking of a place of custody *before* judgment, not a place of everlasting punishment *after* judgment.

Next we come to the Greek word 'Hadés,' which to those Jews who spoke Greek simply meant the 'unseen world' where good and bad spirits alike went. It is true that the selfish rich man in the parable (*Luke xvi.*) is spoken of as being 'in torment' in 'Hadés'; but in *Acts ii.* we find an argument for Christ's resurrection drawn from the passage in *Psaln xvi.*; 'Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hadés, neither wilt Thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption.' Here the word 'Hadés' in the quotation is used for the Hebrew 'Sheol' in the Psalm; and the sense shows that it has no reference to what is meant now by 'Hell.'

The last word of the series is one which has supplied most of the horrid imagery connected with the subject. Neither 'Sheol' nor 'Hadés' had originally any suggestion of fire. It was from the word 'Gehenna' that that idea came into Christian thought. The word is found about twelve times in the Gospels and Epistles; and it certainly stood in the imagination of the writers as a most powerful symbol of the ruin and destruction caused by sin, and of the punishment entailed by evil doing. But what was 'Gehenna'?

The word was originally derived

from the Hebrew 'Ge-Hinnom,' or 'Valley of Hinnom'—a ravine just outside the south-west walls of Jerusalem. Here, in the prosperous times of the Hebrew kings, gardens and other pleasure resorts were found. But here also were practised in the later years of the monarchy horrible heathen rites, which rendered the place abhorrent to every pure-minded worshipper of 'the Lord.' So, when a great religious revival took place in the time of King Josiah (about 620 B.C.), these abominations were done away, and the valley was accounted 'unclean' and loathsome thenceforth. Gradually it became the recognised place for the burning up of all the refuse of the city, and we can well understand how readily it would be fastened upon as a significant type of the end of all things foul and base.

It was a terrible picture of the fate of sinful souls, implying the worst ills. And yet we are assured by the most learned Hebrew authorities that the Rabbis *never* taught the *unending* punishment of sinners, however bad they had been. If we accept it as a pictorial hint, indefinite but appalling, of the awful results of sin, we shall find the Bible use of the word sufficiently intelligible, allowing for that strongly figurative style of expression which Eastern writers and speakers have always used, down to our own day.

There is one word more which we should think of, a very important word, viz., that which is sometimes translated 'eternal' and sometimes

'everlasting.' The Greek word is 'æonion'; and if we remember that an 'æon' is an age—the word has been taken into English—we may catch a glimpse of the meaning of the adjective 'æonion.' It may be doubted whether the New Testament writers conceived very clearly the idea of endless duration; it is a very difficult idea for anyone to grasp altogether. But we know that they had a very distinct notion of a division between their own 'æon,' or age, and that which was 'to come.' It has been suggested that 'age-long' would be a better translation than 'everlasting.'

With regard to the translation 'eternal,' it has been thought that some of the wisest and deepest thinkers of old realised, as our own wisest do, that there are some things not to be measured by lengths of years; time can add nothing to them and can take nothing from them. Thus the 'æonian' punishment into which the selfish and pitiless are dismissed by the Judge (*Matt. xxv.*) is conceived, like the 'æonian life' of the blessed as beyond the range of all earthly measures. Each belongs to the 'eternal' realm, the world of spirit, and its meaning cannot be conveyed by numbers and dimensions.

However these things may be, and in spite of the indefiniteness of the language used, it is very clear that the Bible writers felt intensely the 'sinfulness of sin.' We feel as we ponder their vivid expressions that it is deeply true, and in all ages true, that the

guilty soul is surely passing onward from gloom to gloom, towards the most wretched fate. For part of the punishment of sin is the loss of power to resist temptation. Thus, unless a new force comes to the sinner's aid, he must go down the awful steep to the ruin of all that is manly, all that is akin to God, in his nature. It is the holiest and most loving souls that see most clearly the horror of such a doom, and hence the passionate entreaty of the prophet—'Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?' Hence the pleading of the apostle—'We beseech you, on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God.' Hence the outpouring of the very life of Christ in order to bring souls perishing in sin to know their heavenly Father and to live the true and blessed life.

### III.

We have seen how deeply the Bible writers felt the degradation and misery of a life of Sin, and it may be said here simply and truly, that all the world's best and greatest souls, whatever their other beliefs may have been, have shared this deep conviction. Thus it is nothing short of a universal conviction; though here, as in some cases of bodily disease, those whose condition is the most pitiful do not always feel the most sensible of their real wretchedness.

The first step towards the cure of Sin is to see how miserable and shameful thing the sinful life is. If a girl is brought up in the slums she may grow so used to the dirt and foulness

of her surroundings as hardly to notice them, almost to be content with them. But let her be taken for a short time into some clean and wholesome cottage home, where the air is pure and sweet, and all things neat and orderly, and the little children are rosy and bonny. Even if all this seems so strange to her that it takes time for her to understand all that makes the difference,—how much intelligent daily industry, and what wholesomeness of personal habits; yet she will soon be stirred to a great discontent with her native squalor. It will not be pleasant to be made so dissatisfied; but that feeling is just what will impel her to long for and strive towards a true womanly life.

So every glimpse we get of the glory of a noble character serves to make us more and more discontented with our faults and more ashamed of them. The ideals of such a character come to us in many ways. We find them presented in the daily life of good people whom we meet; we trace them in books of history and biography; or in wise and beautiful works of various kinds; they reach us through the direct teaching of the class or in the advice of those at home. But they also come in untraceable ways, stirring in our hearts we know not how. This secret inspiration is felt especially by those who strive honestly and loyally to do each duty as it comes. But even the worst man is not left to himself; even he has moments when the great light

of a *better* life than he is leading falls upon his conscience. In every heart there is a voice that contrasts what we are with what we ought to be, and what we should have become had we not gone astray from the right path.

Let us thank God for that voice, often so sad within us, sometimes even so stern and threatening. For it tells us the truth; and when a man is living in deadly peril he had better learn what he is really doing, and be no longer deceived. Even the most foolish must pause, and at least wish for better things, when he is told that the life he is leading is full of danger of the most serious kind, and as he gradually learns that his sinful ways are destroying his bodily health, or leading him into sure disgrace with his parents and others whose good opinion he values. Thank God for every reminder that Sin is 'exceeding sinful,' and that pain and disgrace are its inevitable result.

And yet all this would not be worth much if there were not more, much more, to follow. Happily there is more. There is that which comes to the struggler's aid, and helps him to conquer at last even the Sin that most easily besets him. It is not the sense of his unworthiness that does this, nor the fear of the awful results of persistent wrongdoing. These rouse and startle him; but they would at last serve only to kill out hope in him if the one true Source of all hope were not near at hand. That Source is the remembrance of the goodness of

God, the wise and loving Father of all spirits.

It is because men had not come to understand how truly God is a Father that they taught such terrible and misleading things about His way of dealing with sinners. Knowing what it is to be very angry with those who offend us, men thought that He had passions like their own. But they might have taken a lesson from the examples of the best teachers, the wisest kings and rulers; who are never notorious for inflicting disproportionate tortures on law-breakers, but who are just while they are strict in demanding obedience, and who seek to win the loyalty of those under them by means of methods that encourage trust and affection. When such rulers 'correct,' it is really to 'make straight' what is crooked,—that is what the word means,—and no other meaning would express the wisdom of the greatest and best Ruler of all.

Those who have taught the doctrine of an everlasting hell-fire where the disobedient will burn for ever have erred in many ways. They have taken the lurid metaphors of ancient writers as if they were literal statements of fact, and they have imparted to ancient words meanings which they did not originally bear. But worse than this; having forced themselves to believe the most shocking things about God they were led to inflict the most shocking tortures on their fellow-men. It was when the belief in everlasting torment was generally held amongst Christians

that they subjected people of gentle and inoffensive life to the cruelest penalties on account of their religious opinions. Thus the reflection of their dreadful imaginings concerning God showed itself in their own doings.

With all the wonderful growth of wisdom in these later centuries a new light has dawned in Christian thought. The clouds of superstition and ignorance are rolling away, and men are learning the fulness of Christ's thought of the Fatherhood of God, a Fatherhood perfectly wise, perfectly just, perfectly tender and good. As we come to feel what this means we perceive that an everlasting hell is impossible. For what the Father seeks is not vengeance on his foes, but the earnest and sincere love and manly obedience of his children. When they go wrong *He is too good to let them do it unpunished*; but He punishes only that they may learn their sad mistake, and may at last be purified from their Sin.

In your saddest hour, when you know you ought to have done right and could have done it, but did not; when in shame, and, it may be, in the loss of some special blessing that you might have enjoyed, you realise that the way of transgressors is indeed hard; do not let the stroke of correction fall in vain; do not harden your will against goodness, or feel resentful against the pain that comes between you and your ruin. All this sorrow is for your salvation; your heavenly Father loves you as tenderly



as the tenderest earthly parent can; He waits for you to say: 'I will arise and go to my Father, and will say unto Him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no worthy to be called thy son."' And in that sad, sweet hour of your penitence, while you thus long to do the Right as you have never done it before, the great Love will flow around you, and clasp you, and hold you safe as a mother holds and comforts her sobbing child. That Love, so pure, so good, so strong, is the really everlasting thing. All wicked things must give way before it, and all evil in every soul shall at last be overcome by goodness.

And the best of all is that there is an honourable place in the Father's house, as there is room in the Father's heart, for every prodigal who comes back, trusting fully in that great Love and Wisdom. If the seeds of Sin *must* spring up to misery and shame, how sure it is also that the seeds of Obedience, and Truth, and Kindness, and Manliness, spring up to blessedness!

Which seeds shall we sow?

W. G. TARRANT.

[NOTE.—The teacher must earnestly study the subject before attempting to speak to his class about it. If he feels profoundly about it he will find suitable ways of impressing their minds, and further illustrations will readily occur to him. It will be well to read over in preparation some such book as S. Cox's 'Salvator Mundi,' or Farrar's 'Larger Hope.' Several useful pamphlets may be obtained at Essex Hall, e.g. 'Punishment for Sin; is it Eternal?' by H. Shaen Solly

(*Theological Essays*, No. 8); 'Eternal Punishment,' by G. Vance Smith (*Tracts for the Times*, No. 28); 'The Forgiveness of Sins,' by Charles F. Dole (*Pages for Religious Inquirers*, No. 15); and 'Eternal Punishment,' by Stopford A. Brooke (*Pages for Religious Inquirers*, No. 6). The first-named costs 3d.; each of the others 1d.]

## THE MINISTER'S DAUGHTER.

In the Minister's morning sermon,  
He told of the primal fall,  
And how henceforth the wrath of God  
Rested on each and all.

And how of his will and pleasure,  
All souls, save a chosen few,  
Were doomed to eternal torture,  
And held in the way thereto.

Yet never by Faith's unreason,  
A saintlier soul was tried,  
And never the harsh old lesson,  
A tenderer heart belied.

And after the painful service,  
On that pleasant, bright First Day,  
He walked with his little daughter  
Through the apple bloom of May.

Sweet in the fresh green meadow,  
Sparrow and blackbird sung;  
Above him their tinted petals  
The blossoming orchard hung.

Around in the wonderful glory,  
The Minister looked and smiled:  
'How good is the Lord who gives us  
These gifts from his hand, my child.'

'Behold in the bloom of apples,  
And the violets in the sward,  
A hint of the old lost beauty  
Of the Garden of the Lord.'

Then upsake the little maiden,  
Treading on snow and pink,  
'O, Father! these pretty blossoms  
Are very wicked I think.'

'Had there been no Garden of Eden,  
There had never been a fall,  
And if never a tree had blossomed,  
God would have loved us all.'

'Hush, child !' the father answered,  
'By His decree man fell ;  
His ways are in clouds and darkness.  
But He doeth all things well.

'And whether by His ordaining  
To us cometh good or ill,  
Joy or pain, or light or shadow,  
We must fear and love Him still.'

'Oh I fear Him !' said the daughter,  
'And I try to love Him, too ;  
But I wish He was kind and gentle,  
Kind and loving as you.'

The Minister groaned in spirit,  
As the tremulous lips of pain,  
And wide, wet eyes uplifted,  
Questioned his own in vain.

Bowing his head he pondered  
The words of his little one :  
Had he erred in his life-long teachings,  
Had he wrong to his Master done ?

To what grim and dreadful Idol,  
Had he lent the holiest name ?  
Did his own heart, loving and human,  
The God of his worship shame ?

And lo ! from the bloom and greenness,  
From the tender skies above,  
And the face of his little daughter,  
He read a lesson of Love.

No more as the cloudy terror  
Of Sinai's mount of law,  
But as Christ in the Syrian lilies  
The vision of God he saw.

Thereafter his hearers noted  
In his prayers a tenderer strain,  
And never the message of hatred  
Burned in his lips again.

And the scoffing tongue was prayerful,  
And the blinded eyes found sight,  
And hearts as flint aforetime,  
Grew soft in his warmth and light.

J. G. WHITTIER.

## Do what you Can.

**N**EVER be afraid of doing little because you can't do much. Take the first duty that comes before you, and put your heart into it, and it will lead to a second. Persons who complain they can't find out the claims of charity are, for the most part, those who pass over their duties at home ; or if they try to perform them, do so with a heart dwelling upon the thought of something else. Definite work is not always that which is cut and squared for us, but that which comes as a claim upon the conscience, whether it is nursing in a hospital, or hemming a handkerchief. The Church of God is built, as we are told, of living stones ; but it does not follow they are to be all of the same size, or that some of them may not be intended to fill up the holes and corners. Never let your conscience be troubled by the claims of duties that don't belong to you. When one knocks at your door, give it admittance and ask its business. If you ought to attend to it, fix your time and your method with it at once ; but if not, send it away ; don't let it stand troubling and disturbing, and taking the spirit out of your other duties.'

E. M. SEWELL.

'The common problem,—  
Yours, mine, everyone's,—is not to fancy  
what were fair in life  
Provided it could be ; but, finding first  
What may be, then find how to make it fair  
Up to our means.' —R. BROWNING.





# *Rock-Builders*

A. Foraminifera.  
(Little Folk who build up Chalk).

- 1, 2, 3 From the Atlantic (west of Ireland)
- 4, 5. From the Adriatic (same shell in different positions)
6. Living specimen
7. Thin section of Chalk
8. Mud from bottom of the Atlantic



## Nature's Lessons.

'And Nature, the old nurse, took  
The child upon her knee,  
Saying: Here is a story-book  
Thy Father has written for thee.'



THESE lines were written by Longfellow, who loved children, about Agassiz, a man who loved nature.

And who is Nature?' you ask. 'Is she an old lady in a white frilled cap, with grey hair, and with a kind sweet smile under the cap and the grey hair?' That is our idea of an 'old nurse.' But Nurse Nature is so old that even Agassiz, when he was fifty years old, was only a child compared with her; and if he had lived to be a hundred she still would have been long, long ages older than Agassiz, and yet at the same time younger. For Nurse Nature is as old as the world, and as young as you are, and even younger. Before the mountains were piled up and worn into valleys, Nurse Nature was there; and she is *here* now, as young as the buds on the trees in April, and as young as the yellow newly hatched nestlings, that gape for the food their mothers bring them.

You see, 'Nature, the old nurse' is not a person at all. Nature is the world and the things in the world just as God made them in olden times, and is making them to-day.

And whoever likes to see these things and study them is, like Agassiz, a lover of nature: And because Nature has very wonderful and true stories

to tell to those children, both young and old, who so love her, Longfellow said she was like an old nurse who takes a child on her knees and tells him a wonderful fairy tale, to pass the time until it is bed-time.

'Do you love Nature?' You are not quite sure because you don't remember ever to have seen her. 'Well, are you fond of flowers?' 'Why, of course we are!'—then you are fond of Nature, and the more you admire and try to understand the primroses, and the violets, and the May blossom and June roses, the more you will learn of dear old Nurse Nature.'

'Do you like to keep rabbits, or silkworms, or minnows, boys?' If you do you are lovers of Nature, for they are her children—part of her large family.

Do you like to watch the seagulls wheeling high up above the waves, or to hear the lark singing in the early spring time, whilst the mother thrush feeds the young ones in the nest and her mate tells all the country side how proud he is of his wife and family? If *you* do, so does Nature too, and so you and Nature are bound to be good friends.

But perhaps some who read this and are older—say about fourteen years old—are beginning to wonder about things that younger folk overlook. You wonder perhaps about those shells and other strange things, found in the hard rocks and stones,—wonder how they got there, and what they were before they got there. And if you do

wonder about the *reason why* of things it is still old Nurse Nature who will answer your questions.

Whatever you find to interest you in this wonderful and beautiful world, —lightning and thunder, tides, mountains, waterfalls, snow and ice —they all are in Nature's keeping, and she will tell you something about any one, or all of them *if you ask her properly*.

Perhaps you are shy, and do not like to ask any questions of so old a nurse. You think she does not care for you, or will not be bothered to answer your simple little questions. Ah! there you make a big mistake. Some of the men and women, whose names we love to think of, when they were little folk asked their simple questions of Nurse Nature, and she told them such wonderful things that what she said to them made them great and good men and women. She told them secrets which she had kept from everyone else, and then gave she them leave to tell other people. Little George Stephenson wanted to know about engines and how to make them work well, and Nature told him.

And just so Nurse Nature will tell you if you really want to know; but she is just a little bit strict and wants you to be careful to ask sensible questions. 'Oh yes, that's all very well, but how can little folk ask wise questions?' 'Um,—ah,—well now, you have asked *me* a hard one this time. If you ask her such questions as that perhaps even she

will be puzzled. Fancy asking Nature a riddle she could not answer!

But I'll tell you what you can do. Go to your Sunday school teacher and get him (or her) to ask the question in a wise way. Every boy or girl likes to know the reason why of things, and so the teachers and scholars should 'lay their heads together' and plan to ask certain questions direct of nature; and if they ask sensible questions nature will always give them sensible answers, not too hard to understand.

Suppose, now, you and I should go and ask old Nurse Nature some questions about this wonderful world in which we live. She is old enough to tell us what happened long, long ago, and she has kept a record of it locked away in the rocks.

If you read the first chapters of the book of Genesis you will find what some men believed to be the true story of the creation before they had learned to ask questions of Nurse Nature. But when they got at her real records, and began to question her further, she told quite a different tale; and the proof that this tale was true is to be found in the rocks, that are filled with all sorts of remains of animals and plants very different from those that are now found anywhere in the world, and which must have lived long before those rocks were changed from mud into stone. Their remains must have been caught in the mud and fixed there and stayed there when the mud was squeezed into hard rock.

And for all the millions of years since, they have lain there, so that when you take a hammer and break a stone and find something like a shell in it, you may be sure that the shell was once the house of an animal that lived ages and ages and ages before there were men and women on this earth.

Now it was a long time before men found the bunch of keys that opened Dame Nature's drawers and cupboards, and got her to tell them the secret of all the different sorts of things she had stored in them; but when once they had found them they kept on opening one drawer after another, and finding endless stores of wonderful and beautiful things.

Old Mother Hubbard once went to the cupboard to look for *one* bone, and did not even find one; but old Nurse Nature's cupboards are, some of them, full of bones and shells, and plants and coal and gold, silver, diamonds, emeralds, and rubies. How long since she stored them away it is impossible to tell exactly—no one has asked her that question properly yet, and even she begins to forget where she put the first things she stored away, for they are not to be found anywhere. So I want you and your teacher to go with me straight to Nurse Nature and ask her some questions, and see if she will answer us. Suppose, now, that we have found a piece of stone in a quarry or by the road-side, or from a railway cutting or a cliff by the sea-side. It may be a piece of limestone, or a piece of chalk. Anyway there are shells,

or things like shells in it. We want Nurse Nature to tell us the story about how those shells got there.<sup>1</sup>

I once found such a piece of limestone on the top of a mountain. In it were shells, and I asked Nurse Nature how they got there, but she would not tell me. I had not taken enough trouble with my question. Then I began to think. The shells were those of animals that are only found in the sea, and the tides never rise so high as even the tops of the cliffs, much less to the tops of mountains. And the more I thought the more I got puzzled, until I read a book written by a man who had asked Nurse Nature some rather sensible questions, and kept on asking until she was forced to answer him. And what she told him was that what is now the top of the mountain and is very hard limestone rock, was once at the bottom of the sea and was soft mud, and the shells of dead animals settled in the mud and got fixed there; and that when the bottom of the sea was raised up gradually above the surface, and up and up until it became high land, the shells also were carried up buried in the rock, just as I found them when I broke a piece off.

Round about where I live are hills

<sup>1</sup> In order to awaken interest on the part of the scholars the teacher should be provided with some small pieces of limestone and chalk containing fossils, and it will not be difficult for the S.S.A. to have small boxes of such specimens to lend to teachers on application. I will undertake to provide specimens of mountain limestone containing fossils—will friends in other districts kindly add a few specimens from the oolite, lias, and chalk formations? In this way a half dozen small collections will soon be got together, available for use in Sunday School or night class.

of mountain limestone and in the limestone I find some interesting remains of what were once corals, and stonellies, and shells something like cockles; and I know, because Nurse Nature has told me so, that all these are remains of animals that lived in the sea long ages ago,—but they lived not far from land, just round the coast, a little below the water, like the coral reefs round the shores of Australia and the Pacific Islands.

It is very wonderful to learn how much these creatures did to form the rock. Some limestone rock seems to be entirely made up of their remains. The chalk cliffs such as we see at Dover and Brighton, and the chalk downs such as are to be found in many of the southern counties of England were built up by some of Nurse Nature's tiniest children, too small to be seen without a strong magnifying glass, yet so busy and so numerous that they built up the huge chalk cliffs with their own cast-off shells. I have a very strong magnifier called a microscope, and with it I sometimes pry into the old Nurse's secrets. And so I have learnt about these little chalk makers, children which she used to nurse in those long past years, and what I have learnt I will try to tell you.

First of all we must put on wings of imagination and fly back a tremendous number of years, long, long before there were any men on the earth. There was land and there were oceans and we shall have to change our

imagining wings into fins, and dive and swim to the bottom of one of these great deep oceans. The water is quite still, and so you would expect it to be clear; but no, it is not quite clear, for, like the air in a dusty room, through which a ray of sunlight is streaming, it is full of small specks of something settling down, slowly, oh, so slowly, to the bottom of the ocean and forming a sort of grey mud.

These specks are the shells of some of Nature's children, who have lived their little lives in the water above, and now are dead, so that only the shells are left, and they slowly sink to the bottom. In this way the bottom of the ocean is covered with grey mud made up almost altogether of the homes or shells of these tiny creatures. And the mud goes on collecting for so long a time that there are hundreds of feet thick of it, and that at the bottom gets squeezed into a hard mass by the weight of what is above. Then, you know, the earth is nearly always changing in shape, ever so slowly, so that the land gets washed down into the sea, or settles down, and what was at the bottom of the sea slowly rises and forms dry land. In this way the mud made up of the shells of the tiny folk who lived in the ocean gets raised high up above the water; and after many changes, in the course of long ages, is now worn into rounded hills or partly washed away by the tides and storms, forming cliffs.

Now if we take a piece of chalk from one of these cliffs and look at it,



we shall find that it is made up of a sort of very white powder which easily rubs off on our hands or clothes. But if we could look at a very thin piece of it—a piece rubbed as thin as the paper on which this is printed—through a microscope, we should find the thin piece of chalk almost wholly made up of shells, beautiful white shells, so small that a hundred of them laid side by side would measure only one inch.

Is it not wonderful that huge chalk cliffs, and the chalk downs should be made almost entirely of the tiny shells of Nature's children, little creatures that lived millions of years before ever there was a man on the earth?

And they were such simple creatures too. They had no legs or arms or fins or wings, nor had they heads or eyes or mouths or stomachs. They were just little specks of living jelly which crept over sea-weed or floated in the sea-water, and took all sorts of shapes as they slowly moved about in search of food. Fancy searching for food with no eyes to see it and no nose to smell it and no hands to feel for it or legs to run after it! And yet they found their food and grew and built up for themselves shells as beautiful as carved ivory.

There were many sorts of these tiny folk building for themselves shells of various patterns, and some of these shells I have drawn from specimens that I have mounted for the microscope.

The first three on Plate 1 are copied from a slide of the shells of small animals called FORAMINIFERA. I am sorry they have not a shorter name,

but perhaps the long name is meant to make up for the smallness of the animals, of which one hundred laid side by side would measure about one inch; and if you cut a piece of paper one inch square there would be room on it to lay ten thousand of them, and a solid inch would contain one million!

These in the drawing lived in the Atlantic, near the West coast of Ireland; and if I had not got them mounted on a piece of glass to look at through the microscope they would most likely have sunk to the bottom and helped to make the mud that one day will be rock, like the chalk cliffs at Dover or Brighton. If one million of these go to fill up one solid inch, how many would be needed to build up a whole cliff?

Now the animal itself is only a tiny speck of jelly, like the clear part of an egg; but it is *alive*, and can push itself out into long thin fingers and threads, to find and catch food. And, from the sea-water it can collect lime and build for itself a beautiful, delicate shell, so that when it is tired or alarmed it can draw itself entirely into the shell. But if it finds much food it grows too big for the first shell and has to build another alongside the first one,—and then another and another. At figure 6 you see a sketch of a live animal all spread outside its shells. Count the shells. There are ten. So you see this is a well-off Foraminifer with a ten-roomed house. There are hundreds of sorts of these animals, and each builds for

itself a house of a pattern different from others.

I wonder if anyone reading this lesson has a microscope. If you have I will tell you an interesting thing to do. Buy a cheap sponge and take it home and give it a good wash in a basin of clean water. Very likely you will get a teaspoonful of sand washed out of it. Save this sand and dry it and then put ever so little of it on a glass under the microscope and search how many different sorts of Foraminifera shells there are in the sand. I have found seven or eight in one little lot of sponge sand that could be taken up on the tip of a penknife.

Well it does seem wonderful, does it not? that rock, and hill, and cliff, should be built up by such small folk as these; but it is quite true, and here in Figure 7, I have drawn a thin piece of chalk as it looks through the microscope, and you will see that it is altogether packed full of their shells and bits of shells, whilst at Figure 8 is some of the mud brought up from the bottom of the Atlantic,  $3\frac{3}{4}$  miles below the surface. The shells in this Atlantic mud are of the same kind as that drawn at Figure 3, and are called Globigerina.

Now I do not want you to suppose that all rock builders are so small, for besides the tiny Foraminifera there are the lovely Corals, and still more lovely Stone-lilies, and I am sure you would be interested to know a little about these children whom Old Nurse Nature took charge of in days very, very long gone by.

In the rocks round about where I live I find the remains of these animals, and they are to be found in many other places in England and Wales, so that it will be a wonder if you have not seen some of them.

Now we know that these corals do not live very deep down in the sea, but flourish generally near the shores of warm lands, forming what are called reefs. A long stretch of the shores of Australia is fringed with reefs built up by the coral animals. We often hear people speaking of these animals as coral *insects*, but they are no more insects than you are.

An insect has six jointed legs, and the coral animal which is sometimes called a polyp, has no legs at all, and no wings and no head. The Coral polyp is a soft bodied animal something like a sack within a sack. The inside sack serves as a stomach, the outside sack is the skin. Round the mouth of the inside sack are tenacles which are spread out, like the white florets of a daisy, when the animal is hungry, and so it looks more like a flower than an animal. The coral polyp builds for itself a very beautiful stool to sit on, composed of carbonate of lime, which it finds in the sea-water. The shapes of these stools, which we call corals, are very various, and so lovely that many people keep them as ornaments; sometimes a single polyp lives by itself on its own stool or pillar, but more often a number of little polyps bud off from the side of the first, and as each one must have its own seat the coral

begins to look like a tree or a bush. Then again there are polyps that build up a seat which looks like the underside of a mushroom. Now in limestone rocks we often find remains of corals that once were occupied by polyps something like those now living. But how long it is since they were alive is more than Old Nurse Nature will tell us. She lets us guess, but our guesses are only guesses; and the answer to the question would be certainly such a long, long while ago that we could not imagine a time so long. If we take a hammer and go into a limestone quarry and break off pieces of the stone, we find there corals, sometimes almost as perfect as if they had just been built, and yet we know they have been locked up in Dame Nature's stone cupboard for millions—on millions of years.

Now, tell me, is it not very wonderful to find how old Nurse Nature is, and how many countless hosts of children she has had to rear,—children of all sorts and sizes? Children too small to be seen, and children as big as the biggest animal that ever lived. She has taken care of them all and found them a happy and beautiful place to live in according to the need of each one. And just as Old Nurse Nature has cared for them so she cares for you. She cares for you more than for them, because she finds you are intelligent children and can understand her a little. Every question you ask, if it be not a foolish or idle question, she loves to answer; and by and by

as you ask these questions and get her beautiful answers, you grow to be very fond of Nurse Nature, as Agassiz was, and find that she is always about when you want her. And in this way you are never alone. As you walk through the fields, or along the lanes or over the common, or by the sea-side, Nature is there—the old nurse,—who is busy always and yet always has time to talk to you. And what she tells you always has one meaning above all others. What she says always tells you that there is One who knows and who cares for all things; for the tiny Foraminifera and the beautiful Coral polyp, and for the sparrow, and for the lily and the daisy, and for you and for me. And that One we never see with our eyes, but in all that Nature cares for we see His works. He is greater than Nature and older than Nature, and it is He for whom Nature is always working. He is dearer to us than any nurse can be, for he is our Father, God, whose best name is Love.

THOMAS ROBINSON.

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### TIME'S CHANGES.

THE solemn Shadow that bears in his hand  
The conquering scythe and the glass of  
sand,—

Paused once on his way where the sunrise  
shone

On a warlike city's tower of stone:

And he asked of a panoplied soldier near, --  
'How long has this fortress'd city been  
here?'

And the man look'd up—man's pride on his  
brow—

'The city stands here from the ages of  
old,—  
And as it was then, and as it is now,  
So will it endure till the funeral knell  
Of the world is tolled ;  
As eternity's annals shall tell.'

And after a thousand years were o'er,  
The Shadow paused over that spot once  
more.

And lo ! in place of a city there—  
The lakes lay blue, and plains lay bare ;  
And the marshall'd corn stood high and  
pale,

And a shepherd was piping of love in a dale.  
'How,' spake the Shadow, 'can temple  
and tower

Fleet, like the mist of the morning hour ?'  
But the shepherd wav'd the long locks  
from his brow,—

'The earth is fill'd with sheep and corn—  
So was it of old,—so it is now,—  
And so will it be while moon and sun  
Rule night and morn ;  
For Nature and life are one !'

And after a thousand years were o'er,  
The Shadow paused over that spot once  
more.

And lo ! in place of the meadow lands,  
A sea foamed far over saffron sands,  
And flashed in the noontide bright and  
dark,

And a fisher was casting his nets from a  
bark.

How marvell'd the Shadow ! 'Where then  
is the plain—

And where are the acres of golden grain ?'  
But the fisher dash'd off the salt spray from  
his brow—

'The waters begirdle the earth alway—  
The sea ever roll'd as it rolleth now ;  
What babblest thou about grain and fields ?  
By night and by day  
Man seeks for what Ocean yields.'

And after a thousand years were o'er  
The Shadow pass'd over that spot once  
more.

And the ruddy rays of the eventide  
Were gilding the streets of a forest wide,  
And the moss on the trees look'd old—so  
old—

And valley and hill—the ancient mould—  
Were cloth'd in sward,—an evergreen cloak ;  
And a woodman sang, as he fell'd an oak—  
Him asked the Shadow, 'Rememberest thou  
Any trace of a sea where wave those trees ?'  
But the woodman laughed ! Quoth he, 'I  
trow

If oaks and pines do flourish and fall,

It is not amidst seas !

This land is one forest all.'

—*Dublin Univ. Mag.*

## The Two Handles.

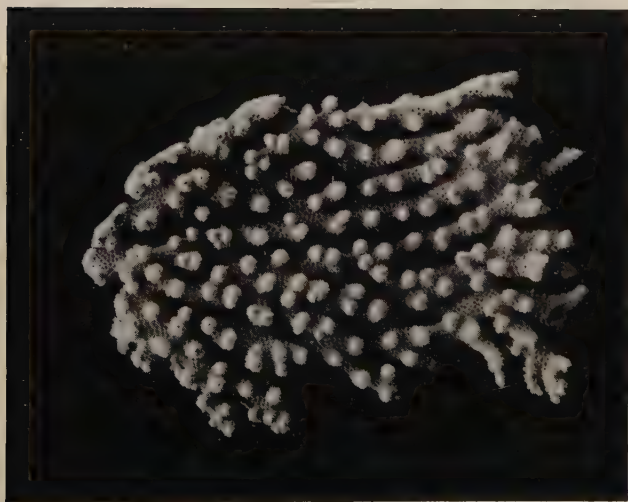


T used to be a common thing  
for vases to be made with  
two handles, one of which  
was strong, for the purpose  
of holding, the other being simply  
for ornament.

Epictetus, the great Stoic philosopher, who lived in the time of Nero, uses this double-handled vase as an illustration to emphasize a great lesson. He says,

'Every matter hath two handles,—  
by the one it may be carried ; by the  
other, not. If thy brother do thee  
wrong, take not this thing by the  
Handle **He wrongs me** ; for that is the  
handle whereby it may not be carried.  
But take it rather by the Handle **He  
is my brother, nourished with me** ; and  
thou wilt take it by a handle whereby  
it may be carried.'





PIECES OF CORAL, OR MADREPORE.



## A Course of Question-Lessons on the Life of Jesus.

AND HOW THEY WERE ANSWERED BY THE SCHOLARS.



THE object of the following series of questions was to enable a class of senior scholars to themselves write a simple connected story of the life of Jesus. To some extent the idea and plan adopted were due to a paper in the *Sunday School Helper* for 1894, contributed by Miss C. J. Bartlett.

The question or questions for the day were placed on the blackboard, and then parts of the First Three Gospels bearing on the subject, often selected by members of the class, were read out and discussed. Then, with

the Bible on the table for reference, answers to the questions were written down, preceded where possible by a repetition of parts of the question, so as to enable a reader to piece together and make up a connected narrative of the whole.

The set of twenty questions was given as below, and the replies placed on the opposite column are practically *those of the class*, compiled from six of the members' papers, altered a little here and there where it was necessary to add a connecting link and to obtain proper sequence.

1. When and where was Jesus born?

Jesus was born about the year 4 B.C. in Palestine, probably in Nazareth, and his parents' names were Joseph and Mary.

2. Of what nationality was Jesus?

By nationality he was a Jew.

3. Who ruled over Palestine at the time of Jesus?

At that time Palestine was a Roman colony, and a Roman governor ruled over the land.

4. What was the hope and expectation of the Jews?

The Jews had long had an expectation that a leader would arise who would deliver them out of the hands of their enemies and establish an independent Jewish kingdom.

5. Who was John the Baptist, and who was his greatest convert?

A great preacher, John the Baptist, went out into the wilderness, and many people came to listen to him. He lived a very plain life. He called upon his listeners to repent of their sins and, as a sign, to be baptised in the river Jordan. His teachings were of a Heavenly Father, and of one who should come after him, and who should be far greater than he. Jesus came to him and

6. When and where did Jesus commence preaching?

7. In what way did Jesus preach and how did he make his teaching clear?

8. What is a Parable? mention some of Jesus' Parables.

9. What did Jesus teach, and what was his purpose?

10. Did Jesus found a Church?

11. Who were his followers?

12. How long did his ministry last?

13. Why did Jesus go to Jerusalem?

was baptised by John, and acknowledged by him as a leader of men.

Some time afterwards John was cast into prison, and about the same time Jesus began to preach in Nazareth and in the small towns in Galilee. He was then about thirty years of age.

In preaching to the people, Jesus used homely words that all could understand, and seemed to speak with authority, which the teachers of that day lacked. He illustrated his meaning by picture language which impressed itself strongly on the attention and memory of his audience.

He often spoke in parables,—illustrative stories, which conveyed the truth that he was desirous should be thought about and remembered. Some of the best known parables are, The Virgins, The Prodigal Son, The Sower, The Talents, The Labourers in the Vineyard, The Rich Man and Lazarus, The Hidden Treasure, and the Pharisee and the Publican.

Jesus taught the coming of the kingdom of God on earth; that men were not simply to follow an orthodox belief, but to obey the dictates of their consciences and judgment. He taught that before God all people, whether rich or poor, were on the same level. His purpose was to devote his life to spreading by example and precept a pure religious faith in our Heavenly Father, who is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

Jesus founded no church, but he prepared a good foundation for one.

His followers were men selected by the Teacher, called disciples, and others, mainly the poor of the places he visited.

His ministry lasted only about three years.

Jesus went to Jerusalem because it was the chief town and religious centre of Palestine, and he probably thought that there his message would reach a greater number of people. Another reason very likely he had was, that he should go



there in fulfilment of what the Hebrew prophets of olden times had said. The Jews believed in these prophecies and their faith in the ancient sayings would induce them the more readily to believe in his mission.

14. How was Jesus received in Jerusalem?

Jesus was received with enthusiasm by the people generally, who welcomed him as one who should be their earthly king and who should deliver them from the Romans. By the scribes and ruling classes he was looked upon as an impostor, and attempts were made by them to lead him on to say things against the laws, so that there might be cause for complaint against him.

15. What did Jesus do in Jerusalem and how did he begin his ministry there?

Jesus began to teach almost as soon as he reached Jerusalem. He went into the temple and preached to multitudes of people, and began a crusade against the privileges of certain traders who used the house of God as a place to buy and sell goods in.

16. Why did the Jewish leaders object to the words of Jesus, and what action did they take?

The Jewish leaders objected to the words of Jesus, as he accused them of leading the people the wrong way, saying that they were hypocrites, and that their sole object was to gain public favour, power, and wealth. The leaders, the Scribes and Pharisees, therefore attacked him in every way they could, watching him and trying to bring him into conflict with the Roman authorities. While the popularity of Jesus lasted his enemies feared to lay hands upon him, but when the people's belief in him as an earthly leader ceased, an opportunity was found and he was arrested.

17. Of what was Jesus accused?

Jesus was accused of blasphemy, of threatening to destroy the temple, of stirring up the people against the government, and of calling himself the king of the Jews.

18. Before whom was Jesus tried, and what was the result of his trial?

At that time Pontius Pilate was the Roman governor, and before him Jesus was led. He tried Jesus on the charges brought up against him but could find him guilty of no crime. To find favour, however, with the people, the governor delivered

19. How did the words and teachings of Jesus spread ?

the prisoner over to them, and allowed them to put him to death upon the cross.

Jesus left no written record of his teachings and sayings, but they were of such a kind that his followers would remember them after his death. At the time of the crucifixion the disciples had been afraid to acknowledge their leader, and had dispersed. But soon afterwards they met together, formed themselves into a community and began to make known the words of Jesus. Converts joined them, and chief among these was Stephen, a most earnest believer and fearless man. Attempts were made to put down the new sect, and Stephen was condemned to death and stoned. Among the chief persecutors of the early Christians there was Paul, who at first did his utmost to stamp out the new movement, but afterwards becoming a convert himself he spread the teachings of Jesus all over the country. To remember these better the people wanted them written down; and so gradually the sayings, parables, and the events which the early disciples could remember in the life of their Master, were collected and recorded. So the Gospels in the New Testament came into being.

20. To what do we ascribe the influence which the life and example of Jesus exert over us ?

The influence which the life and teachings of Jesus exert over us seems to be owing to his striking personality, his marvellous power of knowing the people to whom he was speaking, to his unselfishness, to his loving disposition, and to the example of doing right which he sets before us. He is the nearest approach to an ideal teacher that has ever lived.

ION PRITCHARD.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—From the excellent answers given above, it will be seen how good a result may be obtained by this kind of class teaching. But in order to present a vivid picture of the various scenes in the life of the Great Teacher, it will not be enough to choose a chapter, and 'read round.' The class leader must first have mastered the theme himself; and in order to do this he must study it. The following books mentioned in our list at the end of this volume, will be found helpful for such a course as the foregoing: *Lessons on the Title Page of an English Bible* (Millson), *Life in Palestine when Jesus Lived* (Carpenter), *Childhood of Jesus* (Gannett).

# Short Services for Sunday Schools.



These Services are taken from Hymns for Heart and Voice,<sup>1</sup> the musical responses having been kindly contributed by various friends who have used them in their own Sunday schools.

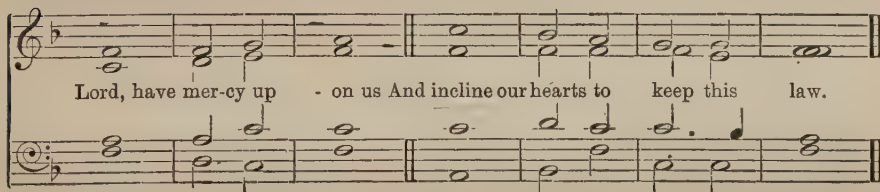
## THE NEW LIFE.

### Hymn.

*Superintendent.*—

**L**ET us listen to the commandments of the new life, given by Jesus.  
Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first and great commandment.

*Response.*—



KEY F.

{	$\hat{d}$	d	:r	m	:—	{	$\hat{s}$	f	:m	r	:r	d	:—
	s <sub>1</sub>	l <sub>1</sub>	:t <sub>1</sub>	d	:—		d	d	:d	d	:t <sub>1</sub>	d	:—
	m	m	:s	s	:—		s	l	:s	s	: - f	m	:—
	d	l <sub>1</sub>	:s <sub>1</sub>	d	:—		m <sub>1</sub>	f <sub>1</sub>	:d	s <sub>1</sub>	:s <sub>1</sub>	d	:—

And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself  
*Lord have mercy, etc.*

All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye ever  
so to them. *Lord have mercy, etc.*

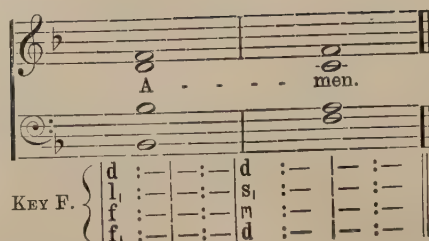
Be ye merciful, as your Father is merciful. *Lord have mercy, etc.*

Be ye perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect. *Lord have mercy, etc.*

<sup>1</sup> Hymns for Heart and Voice. Sunday School Association, Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, W.C.  
Price 1/- net, or 10/- per doz.

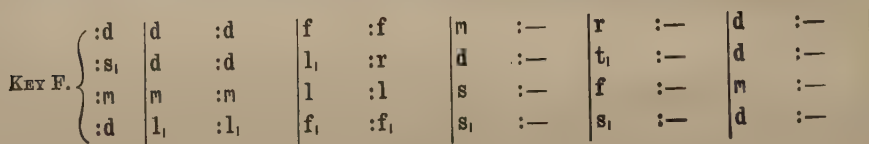
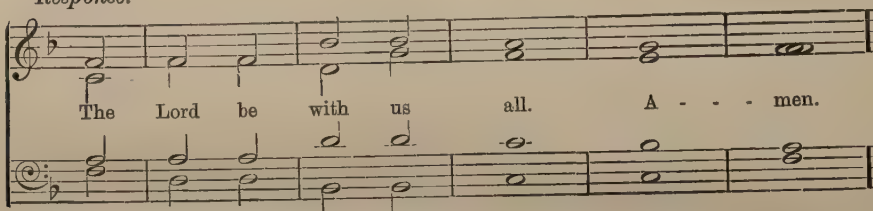
HYMN.  
LESSON OR ADDRESS.  
THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Grant, Lord, that what we have sung  
with our lips, we may believe in our  
hearts. And what we believe in our  
hearts, may we practise in our lives,  
through thy help



*Supt.*—May the God of peace give us peace always.

*Response.*—



SERVICE OF DUTY.

HYMN.

LORD'S PRAYER.

*Supt.*—

It is the Lord's will that we should be diligent in our several callings.



*Response.—*

1. Lord of our life, incline our hearts to keep this law.  
2. As our day so shall our strength be. A men.

KEY C. {

d'	t	:l	se	:-	d'	t	:l	l	:se	l	:-
m	r	:r	t <sub>1</sub>	:-	m	m.r	:d	f	:m	m	:-
l	f	:l	t	:-	l	se	:l	t	:t	d'	:-
l <sub>1</sub>	r	:f	m	:-	l <sub>1</sub>	m	:f	r	:m	l <sub>1</sub>	:-

It is the Lord's will that we should be honest, truthful and upright, in thought, word and deed. *Lord of our life, etc.*

It is the Lord's will that we should endeavour to keep our bodies in health, and our appetites and passions under control. *Lord of our life, etc.*

It is the Lord's will that we should be ready and willing to lighten toil, to console the sorrowful, and to bear each other's burdens. *Lord of our life, etc.*

It is the Lord's will that we should bear with each other's infirmities, and as much as lieth in us, live peaceably with all men. *Lord of our life, etc.*

It is the Lord's will that we should live chiefly to make others happy and good, and not to seek only our own pleasure. *Lord of our life, etc.*

It is the Lord's will that we should diminish the sufferings of mankind, by learning his laws and keeping them, so that we may overcome evil with good. *Lord of our life, etc.*

PRAYER (*altogether*).—O ALMIGHTY LORD, and everlasting God, Vouchsafe, we beseech Thee, To direct, sanctify and govern Both our hearts and bodies, In the ways of thy laws, And in the works of thy commandments. That through thy most mighty protection, Both here and ever, We may glorify Thee, in body and soul. AMEN.

HYMN. LESSON OR ADDRESS. HYMN.

*Supt.—*

The eternal God is our refuge, and underneath us are the everlasting arms.

As our day, so shall our strength be. AMEN. (*See above for music.*)

## SERVICE OF THANKS.

## HYMN.

*Supt.*—

Let us give thanks unto the Lord.

*Lento.*

It is meet and right so to do.

KEY D $\flat$ .

{	m	:m		s	:—	—	:s		s	:—	fe	:fe		s	:—	
{	d	:d		r	:—	—	:r		d	:—	d	:d		t <sub>1</sub>	:—	
{	s	:s		s	:—	—	:s		l	:—	l	:l		s	:—	
{	d	:d		t <sub>1</sub>	:—	—	:t <sub>1</sub>		l <sub>1</sub>	:—	r	:r		d	:—	

O God our heavenly Father, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, we thank Thee for the life Thou hast given us, and the service Thou hast appointed us ; for all we know of thy will, and all we feel of thy love.

We thank Thee, O Fa - ther, Lord of heav'n and earth.

KEY D.

{	m		m	:—	f	:f		l	:—	s	:—	d'	:d	r	:f		m	:—	—	
{	d		d	:—	t <sub>1</sub>	:t <sub>1</sub>		d	:—	d	:—	d	:d	d	:t <sub>1</sub>		d	:—	—	
{	s		s	:—	s	:s		fe	:—	s	:—	l	:s	l	:s		s	:—	—	
{	d		d	:—	r	:r		re	:—	m	:—	l <sub>1</sub>	:m <sub>1</sub>	f <sub>1</sub>	:s <sub>1</sub>		d	:—	—	

For the work we are able to do, for the truth we are permitted to learn; for any good there has been in our past lives, and for our hopes in years to come.

*We thank Thee, etc.*

For this world in which Thou hast placed us; for day and night, for summer and winter, for seed time and harvest.

*We thank Thee, etc.*

For thy word of righteousness and truth, spoken by the wise and good in all ages, shown in noble lives, and in the faithfulness of every true child of thine.

*We thank Thee, etc.*

For Jesus, in whom that word was so clearly shown to men, and who is set as a light of the world, to lighten us on our way to Thee.

*We thank Thee, etc.*

For our homes and our friends; for all that comes to help and cheer us; for encouragement to duty, for strength in temptation, for sympathy in sorrow.

*We thank Thee, etc.*

For the discipline of life, whether we now understand it or not; even for the trials and temptations we meet.

*We thank Thee, etc.*

For this day of rest, these hours of communion with each other and with Thee, when we meditate on thy goodness, and call to remembrance thy loving kindnesses which have been ever of old.

*We thank Thee, etc.*

Lord, make us less unworthy of all thy mercies; and give us grace to praise Thee in our whole lives; ever seeking to know and do thy will, and giving thanks unto Thee for all things.

*We thank Thee, etc.*

The musical score is for the hymn "Amen and Amen". It features a vocal line in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time, and a piano accompaniment in D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. The vocal line consists of two phrases: "A - - men" and "and A - - - - men." The piano accompaniment provides a simple harmonic support. Below the piano part is a "KEY D." section with a list of chords and their durations for the right hand.

**KEY D.**

d	:-	:-	:-	d	:-	:-	:d	t <sub>1</sub>	:-	:-	:-	d	:-	:-	:-
l <sub>1</sub>	:-	:-	:-	s <sub>1</sub>	:-	:-	:s <sub>1</sub>	s <sub>1</sub>	:-	:-	:-	s <sub>1</sub>	:-	:-	:-
f	:-	:-	:-	m	:-	:-	:m	r	:-	f	:-	m	:-	:-	:-
f <sub>1</sub>	:-	:-	:-	s <sub>1</sub>	:-	:-	:s <sub>1</sub>	s <sub>1</sub>	:-	:-	:-	d	:-	:-	:-

## HYMN.

## LESSON OR ADDRESS.

**PRAYER** (*all together*).—WE thank Thee, O Father, for the light of day and for the stillness of night; for the beauty of the sky and of the earth; for the stars and the flowers; for the dear faces of those we love; and for the gift of immortal life. We thank Thee for thy service. What we have learned may we remember, And what we remember, With thy help may we do. AMEN.

*Supt.*—

To Thee, O Lord, our eyes look up.

*Response.*—

And our hope is in thee.

KEY D.

d'	:-	.d'	t	:l	s	:s	s	:-
m	:-	.m	f	:-	r	:r	m	:-
s	:-	.s	d'	:-	d'	:t	d'	:-
d	:-	.d	d	:f	s	:s	d	:-

*Supt.*—

May we go forth with a blessing.

*Response.*—

For Thy good-ness' sake, A - men.

d'	:-	.d'	t	:l	s	:s	d	:-
m	:-	.m	f	:f	r	:r	d	:-
s	:-	.s	d'	:d'	d'	:t	s	:-
d	:-	.d	d	:f	s	:s	d	:-



# The Parable of the Lost Sheep.

LUKE XV. 4. (R.V.).

HUGH ATRINS.

*Allegretto e semplice.*

mf  
ORGAN.  
Ped.

*p*  
10 bars Symphony  
*pp*  
*p*  
ped.

What man of you, having a hun-dred sheep, and hav-ing lost

*cres.*  
*poco cres.*  
*cres.*

one of them, doth not leave the nine-ty-and-nine in the wil-der-

ness, and go af - ter that which is lost, un - til he find..... *dim.*

{ d' : d' . t | r' . d' : t . l | se . l : t . d' | m . d' : t . l | s' d : - t : - }

*mf* *cres.*

it?..... And when he hath found it, he lay - eth it on his

{ l<sub>1</sub> : - | : . l<sub>1</sub> | t<sub>1</sub> : l<sub>1</sub> . s<sub>1</sub> | m : - | m : - . m | l<sub>1</sub> : t<sub>1</sub> . d | r : m . f }

*ped.* *f* *ff* *p*

shoul - der, re - joic - - ing, re - joic - - - - ing! ..... And

{ r : m . f | s : - | m : - . d | r : - | : - | m : - | : . d }

*dim.*

*rall.*

when he cometh home, he call - eth to - ge - ther his friends and his neighbours,

{ d . d : d . d | ma :- . d | d : d . d | m : d . d | d : d . d | f : d . }

*p*

*rall.*

*poco rall.* *tempo primo.*

say - ing un - to them,..... Re - joice with me, for I have found my

{ d . d : t<sub>1</sub> : d | r :- | - : . s<sub>1</sub> | s : f | m . m : r . d | t<sub>1</sub> : l<sub>1</sub> }

*mf*

*QUASI RECIT.*

sheep..... which was lost..... I

{ s<sub>1</sub> :- | - : - : | t<sub>1</sub> : l<sub>1</sub> | s<sub>1</sub> :- | - . : | : l<sub>1</sub> }

*f*

*slower.* *tempo,*

say un-to you, I say un-to you..... That e - ven so there shall be

{ l<sub>1</sub> : s<sub>1</sub> s<sub>1</sub> r :- r r : d t<sub>1</sub> f :- : f m : re m d : r m }

joy in heav'n o - ver one sinner that re - pent - - eth, more than o - ver

{ f : m f r : m f s m : d m r :- t<sub>1</sub> :- t<sub>1</sub> , t<sub>1</sub> : t<sub>1</sub> }

nine - ty - and - nine righteous per - - - sons which need.... no re -

{ m : t<sub>1</sub> r d : r m r : d t<sub>1</sub> :- s<sub>1</sub> s : l<sub>1</sub> m : ma }



*mf*

pen - tance, which need.. no re - pen - tance, more than o - ver  
 { r : - | t<sub>1</sub> : - r | r : s<sub>1</sub> | d : t<sub>1</sub> | l<sub>1</sub> : - | s<sub>1</sub> : | s<sub>1</sub> . s<sub>1</sub> : s<sub>1</sub> . s<sub>1</sub> }

*mf*

nine - ty - and - nine righteous per - sons which need no re - pen - tance,  
 { f : m . r | m : s<sub>1</sub> . s<sub>1</sub> | r : - | d : - . d | f<sub>1</sub> : - | l<sub>1</sub> : d | f . f : - }

no re - pen - tance, no re - pen - tance, no re - pen - tance, no re -  
 { d : - . d<sub>1</sub> | m : - | r : s<sub>1</sub> . s<sub>1</sub> | s : - | m : m . m | r : - | d : s<sub>1</sub> . s<sub>1</sub> }

*rall.*

pen - - - - - tance.....

*f dim.*

*ped.*

6-5 DOUBLE.

**Ring the Bells of Mercy.**Arranged by  
W. Y. MATHER.

1. Ring the bells of mer - cy, Ring them loud and clear,

**KEY A.**

$s_1$	$:-$	$l_1$	$t_1$	$:d$	$d$	$:-$	$t_1$	$:-$	$s_1$	$:-$	$s_1$	$l_1$	$:s_1$	$m$	$:-$	$:-$
$m_1$	$:-$	$m_1$	$m_1$	$:m_1$	$f_1$	$:-$	$f_1$	$:-$	$f_1$	$:-$	$f_1$	$f_1$	$:f_1$	$s_1$	$:-$	$:-$
$s_1$	$:-$	$s_1$	$s_1$	$:s_1$	$s_1$	$:-$	$s_1$	$:-$	$s_1$	$:-$	$s_1$	$s_1$	$:s_1$	$s_1$	$:-$	$:-$
$d_1$	$:-$	$d_1$	$d_1$	$:d_1$	$r_1$	$:-$	$r_1$	$:-$	$t_2$	$:-$	$t_2$	$t_2$	$:t_2$	$d_1$	$:-$	$:-$

*dim.*

Let their mu - sic lin - ger Soft - ly on the ear,

$m$	$:-$	$m$	$f$	$:m$	$m$	$:-$	$r$	$:-$	$r$	$l_1$	$t_1$	$:d$	$r$	$:-$	$:-$
$s_1$	$:-$	$s_1$	$s_1$	$:s_1$	$s_1$	$:-$	$s_1$	$:-$	$fe_1$	$fe_1$	$fe_1$	$:fe_1$	$s_1$	$:-$	$:-$
$d$	$:-$	$d$	$d$	$:d$	$t_1$	$:-$	$t_1$	$:-$	$d$	$d$	$d$	$:d$	$t_1$	$:-$	$:-$
$d_1$	$:-$	$d_1$	$d_1$	$:d_1$	$r_1$	$:-$	$r_1$	$:-$	$r_1$	$r_1$	$r_1$	$:r_1$	$s_1$	$:-$	$:-$

Fill - ing souls with pi - - ty For the dumb and weak,

{	$s_i$	:- .m	r	:d	d	:-	t_i	:-	$s_i$	:- .f	m	:r	m	:-	-:-
	$m_i$	:- .m_i	$m_i$	$m_i$	$f_i$	:-	$f_i$	:-	$f_i$	:- .f_i	$f_i$	:f_i	$s_i$	:-	-:-
	$s_i$	:- .s_i	$s_i$	$s_i$	$s_i$	:-	$s_i$	:-	$s_i$	:- .s_i	$s_i$	:s_i	$s_i$	:-	-:-
	$d_i$	:- .d_i	$d_i$	$d_i$	$r_i$	:-	$r_i$	:-	$t_2$	:- .t_2	$t_2$	:t_2	$d$	:-	-:-

Tell - ing all the voice - less We for them will speak.

{	$s$	:- .s	f	:m	m	:-	r	:-	$t_i$	:- .s_i	$l_i$	:t_i	$d$	:-	-:-
	$ta_i$	:- .ta_i	$ta_i$	$ta_i$	$l_i$	:-	$l_i$	:-	$f_i$	:- .f_i	$f_i$	:f_i	$m_i$	:-	-:-
	$d$	:- .d	$d$	$d$	$d$	:-	$r$	:-	$r$	:- .r	$r$	:r	$d$	:-	-:-
	$m_i$	:- .m_i	$m_i$	$m_i$	$f_i$	:-	$f_i$	:-	$s_i$	:- .s_i	$s_i$	:s_i	$d_i$	:-	-:-

2 Ring the bells of mercy,  
 Over hill and plain.  
 Let the ancient mountains  
 Chant the glad refrain;  
 For where man abideth,  
 Or what God hath made,  
 Laws of love and kindness  
 On each soul are laid.

3 Ring the bells of mercy  
 Over land and sea,  
 Let the waiting millions  
 Join the Jubilee;  
 Peace on earth descending,  
 Fill the human breast,  
 Giving to the weary  
 Sweet and blessed rest.  
*Emily B. Lord*

## Purer Yet and Purer.

R. MANLEY PEAKE.

1 Pur - er yet and pur - er I would be in mind,

KEY F.

d : d	d : d	f : -	m : -	r : r	s : f	m : -	- : -
d : d	d : d	d : -	d : -	d : d	t <sub>1</sub> : t <sub>1</sub>	d : -	- : -
m : m	f : s	l : -	s : -	s : s	s : s	s : -	- : -
d : d	r : m	f : -	d : -	s <sub>1</sub> : s <sub>1</sub>	s <sub>1</sub> : s <sub>1</sub>	d : -	- : -

Dear - er, yet and dear - er Ev - 'ry du - ty find:

s : s	s : s	d' : -	t : -	l : l	t : l	s : -	- : -
m : m	r : r	r : -	r : -	d : m	r : d	t <sub>1</sub> : -	- : -
s : s	s : s	fe : -	s : -	m : m	fe : fe	s : -	- : -
d : d	t <sub>1</sub> : t <sub>1</sub>	l <sub>1</sub> : -	s <sub>1</sub> : -	d : d	r : r	s <sub>1</sub> : -	- : -

Hop - ing still and trust - ing God with - out a fear,

s : s	f : m	s : -	f : -	f : f	m : r	m : -	- : -
m : m	r : de	m : -	r : -	t <sub>1</sub> : r	d : t <sub>1</sub>	d : -	- : -
ta : ta	l : l	l : -	l : -	s : s	s : s	s : -	- : -
m <sub>1</sub> : m <sub>1</sub>	l <sub>1</sub> : l <sub>1</sub>	r : -	r <sub>1</sub> : -	s <sub>1</sub> : s <sub>1</sub>	s <sub>1</sub> : s <sub>1</sub>	d : -	- : -



Pa - tient - ly be - liev - ing He will make all clear.

s	:s	f	:m	m	:-	r	:-	d	:t <sub>1</sub>	l <sub>1</sub>	:t <sub>1</sub>	d	:-	:-	:-
d	:d	t <sub>1</sub>	:d	l <sub>1</sub>	:-	l <sub>1</sub>	:-	f <sub>1</sub>	:f <sub>1</sub>	f <sub>1</sub>	:s <sub>1</sub>	s <sub>1</sub>	:-	:-	:-
s	:s	s	:s	s	:-	f	:-	r	:r	f	:f	m	:-	:-	:-
m	:m	r	:d	f <sub>1</sub>	:-	f <sub>1</sub>	:-	s <sub>1</sub>	:s <sub>1</sub>	s <sub>1</sub>	:s <sub>1</sub>	d	:-	:-	:-

2 Calmer yet and calmer,  
 Trial bear and pain ;  
 Surer yet and surer,  
 Peace at last to gain.  
 Suffering still and doing,  
 To his will resigned,  
 And to God subduing  
 Heart, and will, and mind.

3 Higher yet and higher,  
 Out of clouds and night ;  
 Nearer yet and nearer,  
 Rising to the light—  
 Light serene and holy,  
 Where my soul may rest,  
 Purified and lowly,  
 Sanctified and blest.

4 Quicker yet, and quicker,  
 Ever onward press :  
 Firmer yet, and firmer,  
 Step as I progress.  
 Oft these earnest longings  
 Swell within my breast ;  
 Yet their inner meaning  
 Ne'er can be expressed.

*From Goethe.*

## God is near thee.

R. MANLEY PEAKE.

God is near thee, there-fore cheer thee, Rest in Him, sad soul;

The first system of the musical score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It begins with a piano (p) dynamic. The melody is in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are written below the notes.

He'll de-fend thee when a-round thee bil-lows roll.

The second system of the musical score continues the melody and bass line. It includes dynamic markings: *cres.* (crescendo) and *dim. e rall.* (diminuendo e rallentando). The lyrics are written below the notes.

Calm thy sadness, look in gladness  
To thy Friend on high;  
Faint and weary pilgrim, cheer thee;  
Help is nigh.

Mark the sea-bird wildly wheeling  
Through the stormy skies;  
God defends him, God attends him,  
When he cries.

Fare thee onward, through the sunshine,  
Or through wintry blast:  
Fear forsake thee, God will take thee  
Home at last.

{ From the German. }

# Teachers in Council

## Difficulties in our larger Sunday Schools.

### The Unprepared Teacher.



WILL confine myself to one only of the difficulties which occur in the practical working of large Sunday schools.

There are always to be found teachers who either will not, or—as I prefer to think—cannot find time to prepare their lessons. All teachers know that they are expected to prepare with conscientious diligence in the course of the week the lesson or lessons which they should teach to their scholars on the Sunday; imparting some one clear definite religious truth, or rule of holy living, which should be illustrated in different ways, and, if possible, by the actual experience of the teacher, and so brought home to the hearts and lives of the scholars. If an elementary text book on religion or kindred subjects be read Sunday by Sunday, our teachers are aware that very little good will be effected by the reading unless the teacher drives home the lesson by conversation, illustration, question and answer, and to do this with ease and efficiency, he or she must be prepared. But that is just the difficulty. There are teachers in

our larger Sunday schools who can seldom give the necessary time to preparation, who have duties to attend to at home as well as in the mill or the workshop, and all the hours of the week, from Monday morning to Saturday night, are fully occupied; and though in the school library there may be ever so many volumes of Teachers' Manuals and other helps, these books are seldom, if ever, consulted by those who need them most. Valuable help is offered by the minister's week-day Bible class, but it is attended by a scanty few. And so Sunday morning comes, and the unprepared teacher is in dismay as to how he can fill up the allotted hour; he trusts to luck, which is very apt to deceive him, and when that fails, recourse is had to the story-book to eke out the time. He knows that this is not teaching at all, it is only consenting to be present whilst the scholars are amusing themselves. He suffers from the stings of conscience (or he should do) and says to himself by way of excuse, 'I had no time to accomplish anything better.' What can be done in such a case? We cannot scold him, much less seek to oust him from his chair. If he is not master of his time during the week, it is his misfortune, not his

fault. We can only make a few suggestions which may, if followed, now and then serve in lieu of the hour's careful preparation which all teachers are expected to snatch from the avocations and duties of the world.

(1) Some of the teachers who say they cannot find time for preparation, listen regularly to two sermons every Sunday; and even though the preacher may sometimes be dull, can it really be the case that in all the hundred discourses per annum there is nothing which can touch the heart or appeal to the religious imagination, both of teacher and child? Is there nothing in all the Scripture lessons which are read each year, in the course of divine service, to suggest and illustrate the vital truths of godliness? If only a teacher would get into the habit of concentrating his thoughts on what is said in the pulpit, and of making a note of the gist of the sermon and of its applications, he should never be at a loss for an instructive religious lesson, even though an hour's preparation in the previous week has not been possible. What are our teachers thinking about during divine service that they so seldom avail themselves of this unutilised assistance?

(2) In the course of the week's tasks and duties, if no book or newspaper is ever handled, the teacher must hear what is going on in the world, the calamities that have happened, the great men who have passed away, the achievements that have been won in all branches of art or science,

the evils and wrongs which cry out for redress; and it is surely possible to obtain from this source abundant illustration for elucidating and pressing home the truths which may be systematically treated in the text-book.

(3) The events of one's own life are always in the memory, and there is nothing in which a class will take so much interest as a personal incident in a teacher's life. By a judicious recital of temptations avoided, of hopes achieved, of victories won, of sorrows and disappointments endured which have proved to be blessings in disguise, a teacher who has not had the opportunity to prepare any set lesson, can impress a class with the reality of the great moral laws which govern the universe, and with the value of all that goes to make a noble character. But alas! we are all too reticent as to the inner history of our own spiritual development; and yet there is nothing so calculated to stir the interest and awaken the responsive sympathy of scholars as the story of a teacher's joys and sorrows, achievements and regrets. Nor is there any way so effective when we would warn the young against the sins and temptations of the world.

(4) Every teacher will be able to recall to mind some of the hymns which he learnt in childhood, and which are fixed in the memory by long and tender association; and yet almost the last thing which a teacher sets out to do is to explain the meaning of some of our most familiar hymns.



Very few scholars are able to express, in their own words, the central thought of each of the verses of a hymn. It is often the case that intelligent boys and girls who, in the day school, have reached the fifth or sixth standard, are hopelessly puzzled by expressions or allusions that are a little out of the common. In the well-known hymn, 'Come, Kingdom of our God,' how many can explain the term, 'healing reign,' 'sacred thirst,' 'the rod that flowers,' 'life's glad tree,' 'by the undying trod'? Other hymns present difficulties as in, 'The dew of youth still glistening,' 'A charge to keep I have,' 'By cool Siloam's shady rill,' etc. Are we not wrong in assuming that our scholars have any adequate perception of the meaning of the figures of speech occurring in these familiar hymns? Do teachers realise the necessity of translating the language of the Bible and the obscure allusions of Hebrew faith and customs into their modern English equivalents? Now if a teacher loves the simple hymns which he retains in memory from childhood's days, and has long pondered on their meaning, he is ready at a moment's notice to explain them in an intelligent manner to his class.

These suggestions, let me say once more, are not intended to take the place of careful preparation wherever possible, but may be found useful in those cases in which preparation is for the time impossible.

J. COLLINS ODGERS,

## II.

The suggestion of making use of our Sunday sermons referred to above, is an excellent one, I think; and possibly an account of a plan which we followed with some success in a senior girls' class for a time, may be acceptable in your Teachers' Council.

We had just finished a continuing course of lessons and wanted a change, and there were two points which determined my selection. First, my girls had sometimes home duties which made it impossible for them to be quite regular—a grave difficulty in the way of a continuous course; and second, we were anxious to encourage them to take an interest in the minister's sermons.

I therefore provided some small exercise books; and each Sunday the girls wrote down the date, name of minister, and text of sermon, after a little chat upon the subject. First came the question of text; who could remember it? It was pleasant to note how imperceptibly, but steadily, the interest grew. Bibles were taken and markers put in the place. At first the utmost that could be expected was the re-finding of the text; but, by degrees, by means of a little careful questioning, the *subject* came to be remembered, and even a few points of the discourse itself. Sometimes a scholar would remember a word or phrase that had puzzled her, and this I always regarded as a real bit of harvest; then we went into the matter together and tried to make it clear.

Such an occupation as this would be possible for *any* teacher who *will*; it needs that he or she should listen to the sermon, however, and also endeavour to digest it; and herein lies a very nice little piece of self-training, which will bear excellent fruit if persevered in. For my own part I have ever since been grateful for the practice it 'imposed' on me, in the useful Art of Listening. It is by no means necessary to have had special instruction or to be a theologian in order to carry out such a course. For sermons are, or ought to be, intelligible to the majority of the congregation; and if at times there is something that needs further explanation than the teacher can give, I feel quite sure that the minister would gladly accept an invitation from the class to come in for a quarter of an hour, and chat over the knotty point.

AN OLD TEACHER.

### III.

The excellent propositions by Mr. Collins Odgers leave little to be suggested.

The importance of a short address at the opening of the school by the Minister or Superintendent becomes very apparent, if there are teachers unprepared with any definite lesson.

It should not be possible for any scholars in our schools to come and go away without having one lesson at least, that shall contain a Divine thought and a human experience, so

impressed upon them as to be helpful to them in the coming week.

Could these opening addresses be so varied and unconventional, so fresh and spontaneous, and so in touch with real life, that they would not only give tone to the whole school, but cause our unprepared teachers to take courage and really try to draw their own lessons from so wide and varied a field!

Sometimes the opening address might be purposely given, without its being too apparent, on such a subject so wide as to suggest to the teachers who had no lesson ready—that they might further discuss the subject introduced, with their own classes, to mutual advantage. I have known this plan to be sometimes very helpful.

Often our unprepared teachers, in their attempts to improvise a lesson, flounder into the most difficult and intricate of subjects. Is it because they fail to realise how helpful a really simple lesson direct from the teacher's own experience may be, especially if strengthened by the personal influence of the teacher's own life?

Teaching seems to be very difficult to some who do desire to be of service in our schools, and we must never lose our sympathy for these, nor neglect any opportunity to help them.

Example is the most effective power we have, and I am inclined to think if in our schools carefully thought out lessons are the rule, even the unprepared teachers will in time, with a little encouragement, surmount their difficulties.

HENRY WOODHEAD,

## Virtues of Daily Life.

(LESSONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.)

### Gratitude.



It is told of an Eastern emperor, that having been brought safely out of a desperate battle, in which he was defeated and hotly pursued, he was filled with gratitude to his horse, and wished to reward him. So he built him a stable of marble, shod him with gold, fed him in an ivory manger, and made him a rack of silver. Moreover, he set apart a great many servants to attend to his comfort, and gave them pensions and a special livery.

The emperor was determined that nothing should be omitted which could make the horse's life easy and happy.

This story makes us smile—it was so odd and foolish to provide the horse with things for which he would not care at all. The emperor made the mistake of supposing the horse to be like himself. But is there not something which we really like in the emperor; namely, the feeling which prompted his action? He was grateful, and we always like to see gratitude. For the sake of this, we can almost excuse his absurd way of shewing special kindness to his faithful steed.

Have you ever noticed how much more pleasant it is to do anything for a grateful person than for one who is ungrateful! You feel sure that the person who is grateful would be much more likely to do something for you, if

you needed his help. He would make a better friend. But that is not all. Even if you were quite certain that you would never see him again, you would think of him with more pleasure than of the other. You cannot respect a person who takes every kindness as a matter of course. This churlish manner shews that he does not know the value of things, and that he is not likely to benefit from them—or else that he is full of selfish pride, which is never lovable.

Now I'm afraid that without meaning to be ungrateful, we are all of us apt to forget for how many things we owe gratitude, and to how many people we owe it.

Not one of us, probably, has ever been in any danger like that which the emperor was in. But perhaps some of us have been in great danger from illness. And is not escape from illness as much to be thankful for as escape from battle? 'Oh, yes,' you say, 'we ought to be grateful to the doctor.' And so we ought. But did mother and father do nothing? And were there no others in the house who did what they could for us? Skilful nursing and loving care are generally as necessary as the doctor's visits.

Then, even when we have been well, has not our safety and happiness depended upon our having a home? When we were little, we were not like ducklings, which, however tiny, swim about without help and seek their own food, and have their clothes ready made from their birth! Food and shelter and

warm garments had to be provided for us with the greatest care. Moreover, as we grew older we had to be taught. Walking and talking seem very easy things to us now. But they took a long time to learn, and we needed much help. So with everything that we can now do.

You see, then, how much home has done for us and does for us still, how much we have depended upon our parents and their helpers. And do we not owe them gratitude? Grateful children make happy parents and happy homes.

But how can children best shew their gratitude? Not in the emperor's way. It is true you give presents to those whom you love; and they, unlike the horse, can enjoy beautiful presents. But the chief value, even of presents, is not in their outward beauty nor in their costliness—it is in the unseen feeling that goes along with them. When they are the sign of this, they bring the richest happiness. Without it how poor they are!

And now let us notice two things—

1. The feeling which makes a present valuable, should shew itself all through the year, and in a thousand ways. Anyone who really feels love and gratitude will always try to be kind and helpful. He will check himself when hasty or angry words are on his tongue. He will deny himself, if he wants to play when he is wanted for something else. He will be ever ready with thoughtful attention. By these habits we can give presents daily—for we can

give the chief pleasure which presents are intended to give. On birthdays and similar occasions we like to give something which can be constantly seen and possessed by a person as his own property. But how much more valuable will anything of this kind be when it stands for affection, which brightens and warms the home every day.

2. With respect to this kind of happiness, parents and others in the home are as dependent upon you as you are upon them. Your visible gifts they could buy—your loving thought and service they could not buy, just as you could not buy theirs. You see, then, every member of the home-circle is important. Not one can say it does not matter how he behaves. Just as a single drop of impure water discolours the whole, so one child doing wrong diminishes the peace and joy of the entire family. The great writer, Dr. Samuel Johnson, could only remember one occasion when he had wilfully disregarded his father's wishes. But he could not remember it without sadness. His father was ill, and asked him to go and mind a bookstall for him at Uttoxeter. Pride caused the boy to refuse. On that very day fifty years afterwards, when he was visiting Lichfield, his friends missed him. Here is his own explanation of his absence. 'To do away with the sin of this disobedience, I this day went in a post-chaise to Uttoxeter, and going into the market at the time of high business, uncovered my head and stood with it bare an hour before the stall



which my father had formerly used, exposed to the sneers of the standers by, and the inclemency of the weather.' The past cannot be undone, even by such penance as Johnson's; but his true sorrow should warn us against actions which we must remember with remorse.

### The Greater Family.<sup>1</sup>

Even in our homes we are all, whether younger or older, served by a great many people not present there. When you sit down to breakfast how many things are on the table which were not produced in the house? Do you grow your own tea, coffee, sugar? How do you get even butter and bread? From shops? Yes, and we owe gratitude to the shopkeeper, who tries to supply us with good things at a reasonable price. But are things produced by the shopkeepers who sell them? As a rule, they are not. Generally they first pass through many other hands. They have quite a history, but this fact you are apt to forget because you can go and buy them any moment, if you have the money. You only need money to get them into your hands, and you hardly pause to think how they come into the shops.

But suppose you suddenly found yourselves taken far away from all shops to a place where little or no food could be obtained. (Name such places—

the Arctic regions—mid-ocean—the Sahara desert.) How would you live there? Hunt wild animals, or catch fish, or eat roots? But even such simple modes of keeping yourself alive might be beyond your power, for there are parts of the world in which even savages accustomed to hunger and hardship cannot live. And yet European travellers go almost everywhere. Nansen and his companions lived for a long time among the ice and snow quite comfortably. How did they manage it? By preparing well beforehand, and especially by getting the help of a great many people who were skilful in making the various things that would be wanted (the most necessary being a thoroughly strong ship and preserved foods which would keep good for years). Imagine yourself starting on such a voyage; would you not feel how much you owed to all persons who, by any clever invention or by careful and honest work, had tried to protect you from the dangers awaiting you, or to make your journey in any way more comfortable or successful? If the ideas of any should prove to be wrong, or their work to be bad, how fatal the consequences! The defect might be beyond remedy. What might not happen if the ship should turn out too weak or the food unwholesome?

In such an instance we clearly see how much men depend upon each other. In a vast solitude like the remoter and uninhabited Arctic regions an explorer must be able to rely, not only on his companions, but upon the

<sup>1</sup> The Sunday Lessons for November, page 85, bear upon this subject.

great number of persons far away who have helped to supply the outfit of his expedition. In a great town the case looks very different, but really it is not so different as it looks. The paved streets of a city are as little able to produce food as the Arctic regions. Did you ever see wheat growing in the streets or cattle pasturing there? No. Nor are there wild animals to hunt. If you see a bear, it is private property, and you must not kill it for food as travellers kill polar bears. What would happen, then, if suddenly London was shut off from all the rest of England and of the world, so that no one could send into it the produce of our fields or of foreign lands? The people would soon starve. To a poor stranger, having no friends in London, the place has sometimes seemed a vast solitude. Though there are millions of people there, no one takes any notice of him. But if no one outside of London took any notice of those millions of people, they would be worse off than in a desert. The Londoner has many friends whom he never meets—people in all parts of the country and of the world upon whose labour he depends for the supply of his needs—they work for him, and he in return works for them in different ways. That is the broad fact (idle people are exceptions); for example, there are thousands of people in London who, as authors, publishers, or booksellers, do nothing but supply books: they give food for the mind in exchange for food for the body. How

should we get on if deprived of either of these kinds of food?

This is the general plan by which the needs of men are satisfied; each does something for others, and they do something for him. If there were no such thing as money, people would exchange goods or services direct; through the use of money this exchange takes place indirectly—that is the only difference.

Now, who that looks at these facts can fail to see that we ought all to try to be useful, to find out what work we ought to do, and then to do it as well as we can? You like to listen to music played by a first-rate band, and you know that the excellence of the music depends upon every player doing his part with care and skill. Well, all men should feel that they belong to another kind of band. For every one at his or her daily task has a part to play—a work to do for the general good. What splendid music it would be if all so faithfully performed their duties as to produce perfect harmony, each being able to thank the rest for adding what he could not supply.

In Norway and Sweden they tell that 'there was once a giantess who had a daughter, and the child saw a husbandman ploughing in the field. Then she ran and picked him up with her finger and thumb, and put him and his plough and his oxen into her apron and carried them to her mother, and said, "Mother, what sort of beetle is this I found wriggling in the sand?" But the mother said, "Child, go put

it in the place where thou hast found it. We must be gone out of this land, for these little people will conquer it.” Yes, this ploughing which the giantess feared, gives men great power. Some tribes of men have no one who understands ploughing, and they are less civilised than those who have ploughers. But ploughing is not everything. Suppose every man in England ploughed for himself, and had no other occupations than those which go with ploughing, would the English be so great and so happy a nation as they are? No; for we should all be farmers, and should have nothing to do but produce food each for himself. That would be a very selfish, degraded, and animal kind of life. We have many other wants than food, and some of these can be supplied only by very skilful work which requires constant practice; and, as if to match the different kind of work required, men’s powers differ. On every ground, then, it is well that men should do different kinds of work; and you see that this ‘division of labour’ means not disunion but union between men, for it succeeds only when men regard it as the means of serving one another in the best way. When does a cricket eleven become strong and successful? When each member of the eleven fills his place (whatever it may be) as well as he possibly can, so that the eleven shall have his best assistance. And so a nation becomes prosperous and happy when each citizen works as carefully and honestly in his daily work for others as he

would for himself; and all the nations of mankind will rise to a nobler civilization as the feeling of unity and of duty owing one to another strengthens. If men thought of this more often there would be less carelessness and evil in the world.

#### Trustworthiness.

Probably you have all heard of Harlech Castle, and perhaps some of you know ‘The March of the Men of Harlech.’ The castle stands on a steep rocky cliff on the west coast of Wales, from which there is a fine view including Snowdon. It is a strong square building with a very solid turret at each corner. Many a struggle has gone on round it, but none more memorable than when it stood a long siege during the Wars of the Roses. This is the incident which is referred to in the words of the famous march. But I refer to the siege for the sake of an heroic act which followed it. The castle had been held against the English king’s troops, under Sir Richard Herbert, by a brave and skilful Welshman, who was determined not to yield. At last, however, both parties being weary of the conflict, he surrendered ‘upon condition that Sir Richard Herbert should do what he could to save his life’; which being accepted, Sir Richard brought him to King Edward IV., desiring his highness to give him a pardon, since he yielded up a place of importance, which he might have kept longer upon this

condition; but the king said that he had no power by his commission to pardon any, and therefore might, after the representation hereof to his majesty, safe deliver him up to justice; Sir Richard Herbert answered he had not yet done the *best* he could for him, and therefore most humbly desired his highness to do one of two things—either to put him again in the castle where he was, and command some other to take him out; or, if his highness would not do so, to take his life for the Welsh captain's, that being the last proof he could give that he used his uttermost endeavour to save the brave man's life. The king finding himself urged thus far, granted Sir Richard Herbert the life of the captain, but bestowed no other reward for his service.<sup>1</sup>

What a noble instance of the faithful keeping of a promise! Strict truthfulness and a shrinking from any kind of meanness were traits of other members of the Herbert family. Lord Herbert, who wrote the story of his own life for the benefit of his children, says that, in his boyhood, whenever he had committed a fault, he never denied it, 'choosing rather to suffer correction than to stain my mind with telling a lie, which I did judge then, no time could ever efface; and,' he adds, 'I can affirm to all the world truly that from my first infancy to this hour I told not willingly anything that was false, my soul naturally

having an antipathy to lying and deceit.' And his brother, the gentle poet, wrote:—

'Dare to be true. Nothing can need a lie:

A fault, which needs it most, grows two thereby.'

Now, don't you feel that you would like to know such men as these and have them as your friends? You would put entire trust in them. You would believe that they meant every word they said, that whatever they undertook to do would be done, and that even when nothing was promised they would act honourably. How happy you would be in their company; how sure, when separated from them, that they would do nothing unjust.

But what a splendid thing if all people could place this full confidence in one another. Suppose you go into a shop to buy something—nuts, or fruit, or a ball, or shoes. How do you feel, if, on coming out, you find that you have paid a good price for what is worthless, the nuts being bad, the fruit decayed, the ball or the shoes of such poor material that they will soon come to pieces? You feel that those who have sold you such things are not to be trusted, and that you must either avoid them or look after them more carefully in the future. But to avoid them may be very inconvenient, and to be always suspicious and on the watch is unpleasant. How much better it would be, if they would deal fairly with you. Of course, you

<sup>1</sup> From the Autobiography of Lord Herbert of Cherbury.



on your side ought to be willing to pay a proper price for everything, and not meanly try to take advantage of the seller. The Duke of Wellington's steward once bought some land adjoining the Duke's country estate, and came boasting of having made a fine bargain—the seller was in a fix and wanted money at once. 'What did you pay for it?' asked the Duke. 'Eight hundred pounds,' was the answer. 'And how much was it worth?' 'Eleven hundred pounds,' said the steward, rubbing his hands in glee. 'Then take three hundred pounds,' said the Duke, 'and carry them to the seller, with my compliments; and don't ever venture to talk to me of cheap land again.'

You know that after having served his country as a soldier, Wellington became Prime Minister, and it was his high sense of honour more than anything else, perhaps, that made people trust him as a statesman. Of all people, those who make the laws, and the judges and others who carry them out, should be worthy of trust. Otherwise, how unsafe and unhappy the people are! We in England are now much better off in this respect than some of our forefathers have been—thanks to the efforts of many brave and good men amongst them. But in some countries, the people still distrust and hate those who are in power.

It is said that in India a thief once tested the honesty of the principal persons in the kingdom in the following way. He had been condemned

to die, but he told his jailor that he had a very valuable secret which he desired the king to know. Summoned into the royal presence he explained that by a certain means trees might be made to grow which would bear fruit of pure gold. The king wished the plan to be tried immediately, and went with his court and the thief to a spot chosen for the purpose. On arriving the thief first pretended to go through some solemn rites, and then, producing a piece of gold, declared that, if it were planted, it would produce a tree every branch of which would bear gold. 'But,' he added, 'this must be put into the ground by a hand that has never been stained by a dishonest act. My hand is not clean, therefore I pass it to your majesty.' The king took the piece of gold, but hesitated. Presently, he confessed that he was not qualified. 'I pass it, therefore, to my prime minister,' said he. But the prime minister passed it to the governor of the citadel, and he passed it to the high priest, and even he confessed that it would be useless for him to plant it. Then the thief said, 'Your majesty, I think it would be better for society that all five of us should be hanged.' But the king resolved instead that not even the thief should be hanged.

There have been countries and times of which this story tells more truth than fiction. History proves how much men have suffered from the dishonesty of their rulers.

But we must remember that, even if rulers were perfect, the rest of the people might still be unhappy. Their happiness would depend upon themselves, and, not least, upon the degree to which they could trust one another. A nation is in this respect like a school or a family—the teachers or parents may be ever so true and kind, but boys or girls have many opportunities of causing unhappiness amongst themselves; they will be unhappy just in so far as they cannot join freely together in work and play, and respect each other's rights.

In the history of many countries we read of a time when the whole nation was just and pure, and even if these accounts cannot be relied upon, they, at any rate, shew us what might be and ought to be. We are told, for instance, that once in Ireland there was a wise and good ruler named Brien, and that the people followed his example so well that 'a young lady of great beauty, adorned with jewels and a costly dress, undertook a journey alone, from one end of the kingdom to the other, with a wand only in her hand, at the top of which was a ring of exceeding great value,' and no one did her harm. You may know the story as told by the Irish poet Moore in the beautiful song beginning 'Rich and rare were the gems she wore.' The knight asks the lady whether she has no fear, and she replies:—

Sir Knight, I feel not the least alarm;  
No son of Erin will offer me harm;

For though they love woman and  
golden store,  
Sir Knight, they love honour and  
virtue more.

On she went and her maiden smile  
In safety lighted her round the green  
isle;  
And bless'd for ever is she who relied  
Upon Erin's honour and Erin's pride.

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### High Aims.

You have all heard the curious story which has come down to us from very early times, and which tells of the building of a great tower. [Let some one tell the story from *Genesis* xi. 1-9.] When all men spoke one language, they agreed together to build a tower so high as to reach heaven. And the ruler of the sky, when he saw what was being done, was afraid that the power of men, if unchecked, would become too great. What would they not do, if they should succeed in so mighty an undertaking? He therefore came down and scattered them, and caused them to speak different languages, so that they could no longer understand one another and make plans together.

It was in this way that some one, long, long ago, accounted for the different languages of the world—he thought they must be a punishment which men had brought upon themselves by proud desires. What made him think this? Probably, he had often had that peculiar feeling which

comes to a person when he is alone in the midst of foreigners, whose speech is strange to him. Have you ever been so placed? If so, didn't you feel stupid and humbled? There is no experience so likely to bring down a person's pride. Everybody around you chatters away with ease and freedom, but you are dumb. There is argument and fun, every thought and feeling expressed is passed to the minds of all present and is reflected in their faces, but you understand nothing, your mind is a blank, your features do not move—unless in vexation. Even the youngest child who can talk seems wiser and happier than you.

And then, how this inability to talk hinders men from making any agreement or joining together in any work. Even the simplest kinds of trade are difficult to carry on, if people do not understand each other's language. The exchange of goods is a very slow and wearisome process, if buyer and seller can only exchange thoughts by making signs with their hands and in other similar ways. And as for working together at any great undertaking, such as a building, that seems quite impossible.

Probably the author of the Babel story had in mind facts like these, when he imagined his explanation of the variety of languages. Perhaps, also, he believed (as many men have believed since) that all man's attempts to construct great works, or in any other way to increase human power,

are signs of pride, or at any rate that they *make* men proud.

Now what must we think of these ideas?

1. The Babel story is only a legend, *i.e.*, it is not true, but only someone's guess at truth, and the guess misses its mark. The different languages spoken by men sprang up naturally, and are not a punishment for building a tower. Experience shews us that men may safely build towers higher and higher, if they only find out the right way and build well. In these days men can build higher than ever before, because they have more knowledge. What are the highest buildings you know? (Eiffel Tower, St. Paul's Cathedral, etc.)

And buildings may be remarkable for other things than height. Without being high they may be very large or strong or beautiful. Name some. (Forth Bridge, Eddystone Lighthouse, York Cathedral, etc.)

2. And it is right that men should build high or large or beautiful buildings. They are useful and give pleasure. Instead of being the cause of disaster to men, and of separation of nation from nation, they make men's lives happier, and enable men of different countries to come together more easily. Rightly, therefore, do we honour great architects and engineers. Some of them have been amongst the most hard-working and self-sacrificing of men.

3. There are various ways of building up the good in human life. All

increase of useful knowledge is building. Strangely enough, knowledge has been sometimes condemned in the same manner as the Tower of Babel by the ancient writer — as when some people rebuked the great surgeon, Sir James Simpson, for his use of chloroform to prevent pain in operations. But it *must* be amongst our first duties to understand the world in which we live, and to use the means it offers for our happiness. How well it is also to understand one another! And, therefore, however the different languages arose, men should learn them and thus diminish the barriers which shut them off from one another. Or we may liken the learning of languages to the building of a bridge between nations.

4. But we may say that all good work, all performance of duty, is building, and in all our building we should aim high, *i.e.*, we should do our very best. [Read 'The Builders,' by Longfellow.]

5. And we must remember that our best at one time may not be our best at another time, because our power grows with use. We ought, therefore, to aim above what has been our best hitherto. We should start on each new day and each new undertaking with the desire to do better than before.

'Greatly begin! though thou have time  
But for a line, be that sublime,—  
Not failure, but low aim, is crime.'

6. There is one hint which we may take from the Babel story. Pride is a

very real and a great danger, and the danger is twofold. First, the proud person is likely to aim *too* high, *i.e.*, at something far beyond his present strength. What will happen to a man who, in boastful self-ignorance and without training, tries to leap over a broad and deep stream? Secondly, the proud person thinks too much of getting above others, and not enough of the pleasure and duty of doing his best for the sake of others. This kind of pride may set up too low a standard, for your actions should not be limited by those of others, but only by your powers. Moreover, in proportion as desire for mere victory colours action, even great deeds and gifts become less fair to look upon.

A few years ago, Dr. Janssen, an eminent Frenchman, formed the idea of putting a house on the summit of the highest of the Alps, Mont Blanc, and he has since carried the idea out, in spite of the greatest difficulties. What was his object? To be able to say that his house was higher than anyone else's? No, for then he would have been satisfied with a lower situation. He had a nobler ambition. He is a scientific man, and he wanted to gain knowledge about heat and cold and winds at that high altitude. His house is an observatory. Therefore, we can honour his work without any hesitation—he was free from personal pride. And how ought you or I to try to imitate him? By doing our best in the different duties to which we are called,



### Habit and Perseverance.

That experienced soldier of the 17th century, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, (1583—1648), wrote the following curious description.<sup>1</sup>

‘To make a horse fit for the wars, and embolden him against all terrors, these inventions are useful; to beat a drum out of the stable first, and then give him his provender, then beat a drum in the stable by degrees, and then give him his provender upon the drum; when he is acquainted herewith sufficiently, you must shoot off a pistol out of the stable, before he hath his provender, then you may shoot off a pistol in the stable, and so by degrees bring it as near to him as you can till he be acquainted with the pistol, likewise remembering still after every shot to give him more provender. You must also cause his groom to put on bright armour, and so to rub his heels and dress him; you must also present a sword before him in the said armour, and when you have done, give him still some more provender; lastly, his rider must bring his horse forth into the open field, where a bright armour must be fastened upon a stake, and set forth in the likeness of an armed man as much as possible; which being done, the rider must put his horse on till he make him not only approach the said image, but throw it down, which being done, you must be sure to give him some provender, that he may be encouraged to do the like against an adversary in battle. It will be good

also that two men do hold up a cloak betwixt them, in the field, and then the rider to put the horse to it till he leap over, which cloak also they may raise as they see occasion, when the horse is able to leap so high.’

There is something to think about in this quaint old account.

1. It shews how a horse may be brought gradually to do things from which he would at first shrink with the greatest terror. Horses are naturally very timid creatures. Suppose they could talk, what do you think they would say, if soldiers tried to ride them into battle without giving them any previous training for it? They would tell how much they dreaded the noise of guns, the flashing of swords, the confusion of fighting. And they could not be persuaded to go into the midst of all this. But train them step by step, and they will go.

Now have you ever felt like an untrained horse being urged into a battle? That is, have you ever felt a great fear when some task was set before you for the first time? Sooner or later almost everyone has experiences of this kind. Some of the greatest men have had it, when they were required first to speak in public. The famous orator of ancient Greece, Demosthenes, failed utterly at the outset of his career—he was too timid and too feeble. But he was determined to overcome his defects, and began training himself most carefully. Curious stories are told about him. It is said that to practise his voice he went to the sea-shore, put pebbles in

<sup>1</sup> In his *Autobiography*. See also p. 169.

his mouth, and tried to speak louder than the roar of the waves; also that he spoke as he ran up-hill; also that he shut himself off from company in an underground chamber, in order that he might give all his time to the study and practice of his art. By this perseverance he succeeded, and now after hundreds of years he is still famous, and men read his speeches with admiration.

How different the result, if, after his first failure, he had said, 'I can't,' and ceased to try. That is what we are all tempted to do when a new difficulty comes before us. And almost everything looks difficult at first—a new language, a new science, a new piece of music, a new musical instrument, even a new game. But we may always remember the war-horse and Demosthenes—they shew that after a while, slowly and imperceptibly, the hard thing becomes easier. Though we may not notice the change for a long time, yet some day, if we persevere, we do with pleasure and success what once seemed impossible for us. Step by step—that is the great rule for all our efforts at learning or doing. When they wanted to build a railway bridge over the Niagara river, how do you think they set to work? They began by flying a kite—that carried a string across. The string was used to pull a rope over, the rope a wire, the wire a cable, and then their first great difficulty was overcome.

2. You will have noticed that the horse in the account we began with,

was always to be rewarded with 'pro-vender.' That was a way of coaxing him to disregard his fears. But it would be a strange boy or girl, would it not, who always had to be coaxed in this way? What is the difference between us and horses in this matter? Horses are strong and beautiful animals. We sometimes call them 'noble' creatures. But they have not the same ideas of what is good as men have. When we call a man noble, it is in a different sense, is it not? Like horses, men must eat to live, but if any man declared that he lives to eat, and that nothing but the pleasure of eating would tempt him to work, you would not call him noble. What would you think of any king who said this? Hear what Alfred the Great said, as he neared the end of his life—'I desire to leave to the men that come after me a remembrance of me in good works,' and again, 'so long as I have lived I have striven to live worthily.' You see, King Alfred's greatness, and the reason why men honour his name so much still, lay in this—that he set certain good aims before him and worked with a will for them during his whole life. The glad choice of good aims and firmness of will in pursuing them in spite of difficulty, these are the qualities which make a noble man. And let us remember that we can all be noble in our own way and degree. King Alfred had a great mind and a great position. His aims were many, and he had much success in all. But if a person can undertake only one kind of work, may

not perseverance in that be noble? A Russian painter, Ivanof, has become famous through a single picture, and that an unfinished one. For twenty years he tried to represent on canvas the scene which he had in his mind ('The Coming of Christ,' *i.e.* to be baptised by John in the Jordan), but only at the end of this long period did he satisfy himself. And now, in a gallery in Moscow, the pictures which he put aside as unworthy, stand side by side with the final masterpiece, and shew the unwearied efforts by which it was produced.<sup>1</sup> 'Where there's a will there's a way,' is a good motto.

#### Little Things.

One day a merchant was riding from market, well laden with money, and anxious to get it home as quickly as possible. But he had to stop at a village inn for dinner, and, when he was ready to start again, the ostler who brought out his horse said, 'Sir, there is a nail missing in one of your horse's shoes. Look, it's the one on the left hind-foot.' 'Oh, one nail more or less doesn't matter,' replied the merchant, 'the shoe will hold well enough for the six hours which are yet before me. I am in a hurry.' And on he went. Four hours later he had again to call at an inn to give his horse a feed, and this time the ostler came to him in the room, saying, 'Sir, your horse has lost the shoe of his left hind-foot. Shall I take him to the

blacksmith?' 'H'm,' murmured the merchant, 'bother the shoes! I have only two more hours to ride. The horse will hold out for that time. I have to get on quickly.' And again he set forth. He had not gone far, however, when the horse began to limp; and the horse had not limped long, before he began to stumble; and not long after he began to stumble, he fell and broke a leg and couldn't get up again. The merchant did not now say 'Oh, bother horses, one more or less doesn't matter,' but he scratched his head, unbuckled his money bag and cloak from the horse's back, and continued his journey on foot. As before, he was well laden with money and anxious to get it home as quickly as possible, but now he had to take his time. On the way he thought to himself—'And so that brute of a nail was the cause of all this misfortune!'

That was a foolish merchant, but how easy it is to fall into the mistake he made! How often we are tempted to say 'Oh, this little thing doesn't matter,' or 'That's only a trifle,' or 'Why should I trouble about that small detail?' without pausing to consider what may be the consequence of our neglect! Of course, there are things which are unimportant. But experience shows how many little things are important. We are apt to forget the power which a multitude of things may have even when singly they are very small and weak. A drop of rain is by itself a very small thing. But many drops falling on

<sup>1</sup> 'Impressions of Russia,' by Brandes, p. 163.

you wet you through. Raindrops feed the grass and the crops, which feed cattle and men. Raindrops supply the ocean's mighty mass of water—only raindrops, or snowflakes! What would happen if raindrops had it in their power not to fall, and if first one, then another, began to say 'We *will* not fall?'

There is a fable which runs as follows:—A drop of water fell out of a cloud into the sea, and finding itself lost in such an immensity of fluid matter, broke out into the following reflection; 'Alas! what an insignificant creature am I in this prodigious ocean of waters: my existence is of no concern to the universe, I am reduced to a kind of nothing, and am less than the least of the works of God.' It so happened that an oyster, which lay in the neighbourhood of this drop, chanced to gape and swallow it up in the midst of its humble soliloquy. The drop, says the fable, lay a great while hardening in the shell, till by degrees it was ripened into a pearl, which falling into the hands of a diver, after a long series of adventures, is at present that famous pearl which is fixed on the top of the Persian diadem.<sup>1</sup>

This fable does not give a correct account of the origin of pearls, but it does give us a true hint as to the unsuspected value which may lurk in little things. Raindrops never turn to pearls, but they so often inconvenience us that we are apt to forget

their usefulness as raindrops. But if it rained only pearls for a year, we should wish the pearls to be rain again. There are countries in which raindrops are felt to be more precious than pearls.

Little things are sometimes important because of the danger which lurks in them. What do doctors tell us about little things? Sometimes a terrible disease breaks out, many people take it and some die, and no one can tell the cause of all this trouble. But the doctors set to work and make the most careful enquiries. They find, perhaps, that the people who have been ill have all had milk from one dairy. They go to the place where the cows are kept and discover that the cows have been drinking bad water. And what makes the water bad? Perhaps to look at it you would not think it was bad, but it may be full of certain very tiny creatures which are too small to be seen without a microscope. And it is these that do the harm. They should and might be kept out of the water. 'What a trifling matter to attend to!' Yes, but you see how much suffering may come from a little cause.

A short time ago it was said in the newspapers that in South Africa a swarm of locusts had stopped a railway train. They settled on the line in such dense masses that the engine could not make way against them. Who would have supposed such a thing possible?

There is a story told of a certain

<sup>1</sup> Spectator, No. 293.



king, which will illustrate our lesson. An ambassador remarked to him with surprise: 'Sire, I have visited most of thy principal towns and find no walls reared for defence. Why is this?' 'Indeed, Sir Ambassador,' replied the King, 'thou canst not have looked carefully. Come with me to-morrow morning, and I will shew thee the walls of the city.' On the following morning the king led his guest out upon the plains where his army was drawn up. 'There, sir,' said he, 'thou beholdest the walls of our city—ten thousand men, and *every man a brick!*'

Such a thought as this probably led to the calling of a person 'a brick,' in compliment, for it means a person who is true to duty; a person who realises that, however insignificant he may be as an individual, he is part of a great whole, and that the soundness and strength of the whole depends upon him and others like him. Never imagine, then, that you are without influence. You always have an influence for good or evil. Never despair of being able to help on what is right and true. You may, indeed, waste your efforts. They may be ever so good in intention, but if they are made at random or in any other way unwisely, they will fail. But—will you believe it?—a small piece of cork can move a great bar of iron. If a bar of iron weighing a hundred-weight, is suspended in the air, and a ball of cork weighing less than an ounce is suspended near it and swung

against it at certain moments, the iron will commence moving before long, and in due time it will swing with a wide powerful movement. All through the slight weight of the cork properly directed! Need the weakest person despair of moving things on toward good?

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### Courage.

Who do you think are the bravest of men? Soldiers? Well, there are and have been many brave soldiers, and I will tell you of one. His name was Stockenstrom, and he lived in South Africa. He met his death in the year 1811, in the following way. War was about to commence against some tribes called Kafirs, and Mr. Stockenstrom, though really a magistrate, had to turn soldier and lead some of the troops. But he had great influence with the Kafirs, for he had always tried to be just to them, and they respected him; and he thought that, if he could only get a talk with the chiefs, he could persuade them to come to an agreement without force. In a few days he was summoned to cross some mountains to consult with the commander-in-chief, and he started off with about forty men on horseback. On the mountains he found the opportunity he desired, for the Kafirs were there in great numbers. What did he do? He rode straight up to them, jumped off his horse, and was in friendly talk with them before they had recovered from their surprise at so bold an act. For

some time everything seemed to be going well, when suddenly a yell was raised and Mr. Stockenstrom and many other members of the party were attacked and slain. It is believed that messengers had come bringing news that fighting had commenced at some distance, and that the Kafirs became so excited on hearing this that they could no longer control themselves.

Now, though the result was unfortunate, Mr. Stockenstrom's act was one of noble bravery. He was willing to run great risks, not because he was careless about his own life, but because he had a good object in view. He thought that for this object, upon which the lives of many depended, he ought not to mind risking his own life. And that is the nature of all true soldierly bravery. Mr. Stockenstrom's son, who became still more famous than his father, acted in a similar way several times. Both in war and in peace he never shrank from danger when he felt that it was his duty to go on; and, happily, though his courage brought him into much opposition and trouble, it did not bring him to a sudden and violent death like that of his father.

Let us now take an instance of another kind. Sometimes courage brings the most unexpected honours, as, for example, when Pertinax was made Emperor of Rome. He had risen from a humble rank, had held many offices, and had done his duties with the most faithful industry and honesty. But these good habits were

now out of fashion. The Emperor Commodus had set a horrible example of wickedness, and his example had been much followed. Pertinax knew that his efforts to do right were more likely to put him in danger than to bring him to the highest honours; but the only fear he had was the fear of wrong-doing. So, when men came to his house late one night and woke him from sleep, he was perfectly calm, though he supposed that he was going to be attacked and killed. When they told him that the tyrant emperor had been killed, and that they desired him to occupy the throne instead, he could not believe them for some time. He did not wish for the great position, which carried with it a great responsibility; but he could not refuse what seemed to be his duty, and he at last consented. For him the acceptance of the purple was itself a great act of courage, and this was soon proved by events. His determination to put down injustice and other evils aroused opposition from those who profited by them, and before he had reigned ninety days he was slain in his own palace as he boldly faced a band of conspirators (A.D. 193).

Happily, we do not live in such evil times, and in any age only a few persons are called to occupy great positions. Nor are we all required to be soldiers. But, is there anyone who has no opportunities or no need to show courage? We have seen that courage is readiness to face difficulty or danger, and to bear suffering or

harm, for some good object or in obedience to duty. Who is not called to do this sometimes? A workman doing the ordinary duties of his trade may have opportunity for courage equal to that of the bravest soldier. Two workmen were fixing a lightning-conductor on a steeple in Belgium, and at the summit it was necessary that one of the men should stand on the shoulders of the other. This was an awkward and dangerous position at the best, but suddenly a violent gust of wind came, and some of the molten lead that was being used was spilled by the upper workman upon the hand and arm of the lower one. The pain was intense, as some of the lead remained on the flesh. But any movement might have caused the upper man to fall to the pavement, and the lower man, knowing this, remained motionless, bravely enduring while his flesh was being deeply burned.

But some of you are not yet in any business; need you never be courageous? Have you never found it difficult to tell the truth in school or at home, fearing that you would lose something by it? Have you never feared that others would laugh at you if you did right? It needs courage to keep down angry words, or to refrain from striking a blow, when you would like to take a revenge. It needs courage to bear the consequences of foolish action, and not to shift them on to others, or to begin with a cheerful spirit a new kind of lesson or study, which is difficult and which you cannot

see the use of. In fact, everything which threatens us with any discomfort or loss demands courage. In war the greatest test of courage is when men have to stand still and reserve fire though they are being attacked. This requires coolness and self-restraint. It is much easier to be brave in a dashing movement and great excitement. The same is true in every part of life's battle. The only difference is that in the ordinary intercourse of men there is more frequent need of steady courage than of the other kind. Here is a noble instance. A man hearing Buddha teach that men should return good for evil turned upon the teacher and reviled him. Buddha was silent, and would not answer him, pitying his mad folly. The man having finished his abuse, Buddha turned to him, saying, 'Son, when a man forgets the rules of politeness in making a present to another, the custom is to say, "Keep your present." Son, you have now railed at me; I decline to entertain your abuse. So long as you keep your unkind thoughts they will bring misery to you rather than to me.'

### Strength and Gentleness.

You like to watch machines, don't you? When a train comes into a railway-station you like to go up to the engine to see the driver set the great mass in motion again. He pushes a handle, and what an immense power is set working by this small movement! Soon the whole

train has rushed beyond your sight. The machinery of a steamship is, I think, even more interesting. From the deck you can look right down into it, and see its parts distinctly, and watch them as long as you like. How imposing are the huge bright masses of steel which roll round or move up and down with perfect regularity, and which are made to go fast or slow by a touch of the engineer's hand.

Perhaps some of you have seen other powerful and beautiful machines in factories or exhibitions [let the children name a few]; but all the best machines now made are like each other in this, that they are easily controlled. At one moment they will exert all their force, at another they will reserve it all, or as much as you please. When properly made and managed they are always obedient. It is the union of great power with exact obedience that makes them so useful.

And now let us ask what is it that they obey so readily? They obey man's thought. It is thought which controls them—without thought behind them they would do either nothing or harm. If there is no one to keep up the fire and turn on the taps, the engine will not move; and if the engine driver is careless and does not observe the signals, a dreadful accident occurs. Notice two facts then—machines will do much of man's bodily work for him, but they will not do his mind's work. They will carry out his thoughts, but only on con-

dition that he first puts thoughts into them or governs them by thought.

And now let us see what a difference the invention of such machines has made. How did men do when there were no railways or steamships? How did they travel? How did they carry goods? On land they had to depend entirely on their own strength, or on the strength of horses or other animals. Even now in some parts of the world men alone do the work that in England is done chiefly by the locomotive—for example, the journeys which have been made by Mr. Stanley and others in Central Africa have been made on foot; and hundreds of black men have had to be hired to carry the loads containing food and other things required. What an enormous amount of human labour is necessary for such journeys! Go to South Africa, and, where there are no railways, you will find that travelling is done by the ox-waggon, a long waggon with a still longer team of oxen (often eighteen) to draw it. Go to North Africa and you find camels used by the caravans which cross the great deserts. In all these instances travelling is made easier for men by the labour of other men or animals, but how far short of the ease of railways.

How were journeys by water made when there were no steamships? Of course men soon found out the value of sails, but sails were little or no good when the wind was unfavourable, and rowing was the only other means of moving a ship. The Greeks and



Romans depended very much upon rowers, who were generally slaves. Nor was the rowing of great ships soon done away with. The galleys of the Spanish Armada had rowers as well as sails. The oars which were used were enormous; sometimes several men would pull at each, and even then the toil was great, especially in stormy weather. The life of a galley-slave was a very hard one. No one would have endured it except under some severe compulsion.

What a change has been brought about in all travelling, whether by sea or land, through the discovery of the power of steam! The steam-engine has relieved men and animals of much of the severest labour of journeying. And the same might be said of almost every kind of task which men have to get done. Bodily strength is not so generally important and valuable as it once was. This kind of change is one of the chief features of what we call civilization.

Now does this seem to you to mean that, as we have so much help from machinery in these days, we need not try to be strong in any way, and that the civilized man may be lazy and idle? Oh no, it means that the civilized man must be strong in *different* ways from the uncivilized. Remember what we began with. Did we not find that machines do no good and may do harm unless they obey thought? The more machinery we have, then, the more strength of thought or of mind we must have,

And how does strength of thought or of mind shew itself in governing machines? By making them put out just the amount of force required for any particular purpose—by constant watchfulness so that they may neither overshoot the mark nor come short of it. And does anyone say that he has *no* machine to direct and govern? Why, if he has no other, he has himself—his own body, his own faculties. All of us have at least this machinery to manage, and our mode of managing it should be just like that of the engine-driver. We ought to have our powers well under control, so that when much energy is required we may be able to put it forth, and when little is needed we may be able to hold it in. And thus we see the value of both strength and gentleness.

Nothing which has been said is intended to praise weakness, whether of body or of any other part of us. But the body and all our faculties should be at the command of our best thoughts, such as our desire to do right, our wish to make others happy. And these thoughts shew us the great value of gentleness. Who is the gentleman? The man who, however strong, is gentle when gentleness means kindness, who does not treat the weak roughly, who is not noisy when others want quiet, who does not despise the doing of little acts of service when they happen to be the ones most wanted.

Have you ever seen a steam-hammer? It can give either a stroke of enormous

force or the gentlest pat—whichever is required. What would the strongest man be, if he could not reserve his strength in a similar way?

‘He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty,  
And he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.’—*Prov. xvi. 32.*

### Pride.

You all know the name of Socrates. Who can tell anything about him? He lived in Athens in the fifth century before Christ. He was one of the wisest of men, but was falsely charged with not believing in the religion of his city, and with leading the young into error and evil. He was condemned to drink poison, and thus died in the year 399 B.C. The citizens soon saw their folly and mourned their loss.

The following incident will give us a glimpse of the practical wisdom of this great man.

One day he found a friend of his, named Aristarchus, very sad. ‘What is the matter?’ said he. Aristarchus told him that, owing to the war that was then going on, his house was full of relatives, women who had no one else to look after them, and therefore took shelter under his roof. But business was at a standstill, and his own income was reduced. What was he to do? He did not want to be unkind, but how was he to feed and clothe so many?

Socrates listened patiently, and then the following conversation took place.

‘It seems strange that you should

be so troubled about this matter. Look at Keramon! he has a large household, but he becomes richer, not poorer, by their means.’

‘But his people are all slaves, whereas mine are all free.’

‘Then those who are most highly esteemed are to be the most useless and burdensome, are they? Is that right?’

‘Ah, but the slaves have been brought up to trades. My people, being free, have been properly educated.’

‘But I suppose they know how to bake bread and make garments?’

‘No doubt they do; but those who get their living in these ways have slaves whom they can compel to work.’

‘And so your people, because they are free and related to you, are to do nothing but eat and sleep! Are they more contented and happy for this kind of life? Why did they learn anything, if they are to make no use of their knowledge? I’m sure this folly doesn’t make you love one another. You think them a burden, and they know you think them so. If this state of things continues, you will become daily more estranged. But show them how they may be useful, and the ties of affection will be strengthened by this period of trouble.’

‘Oh, what truths you tell me,’ exclaimed Aristarchus, and he went straight off to put Socrates’ advice into practice. Not long after he came to the wise man gratefully to report that cheerfulness and contentment reigned in his home.

You see what respect Socrates had

for every kind of useful work, and how he discouraged foolish pride. No act by which you can do a service, or make any one happier, or keep yourself from idleness, is beneath your dignity—that was his principle. Or rather, he held that to neglect any such act meant a loss of dignity.

Some kinds of work are more difficult, and require more cleverness than others, and it is best that each person should, as a rule, do the work for which he is most fitted. But that one person is more gifted or better trained than another should not make him proud or contemptuous in his behaviour. Every talent has its value, and the person who uses his talent well should be respected, however small it may be compared with that of others.

There is a story that a cat once met a fox in a wood, and having respect for his position in the world and his abilities, addressed him politely, saying, 'Good-day, good Mr. Fox, how are you? How are you getting on? I hope these hard times do not affect you?' But the haughty fox looked at the cat from head to foot, and for a long time hesitated whether he would answer her at all. His first words were a string of abusive names, and then he asked, 'What are you thinking of? Do you know what you are doing, when you venture to question me? What do you understand? What can you pretend to do?' 'I can only do one thing; I understand but one art,' answered the cat modestly. 'And pray what is that?' inquired the fox. 'When the

dogs are after me, I can run up a tree and save myself.' 'Is that all?' returned the fox, contemptuously. 'I am master of a thousand arts. Besides these, I have a whole sackful of cunning tricks. I pity you. Come with me and I will shew you how to deceive the dogs.' At this moment a hunter with four dogs came by. The cat sprang nimbly up a tree, and concealed herself among the leaves and branches, whence she called down to her companion, 'Open your sack, friend fox, open your sack!' But the dogs had already seized him.

There is a fable of *Æsop's* which has a happier ending than this, but gives a similar lesson.—

A lion waked up from sleep to find a mouse running over him. In a fit of anger he was about to kill him, but the mouse piteously entreated, saying: 'If you will only spare my life, I shall be sure to repay you.' The lion laughed but let him go. Soon after this, the lion was caught by some hunters, who bound him to the ground with strong ropes. The mouse heard his roar, and gladly came to the rescue. Having set the king of beasts free by gnawing the ropes, he said: 'You ridiculed the idea of my ever being able to help you, not expecting to receive from me any repayment of your favour; but now you know that it is possible for even a mouse to assist a lion.'

Pride is so ugly that it spoils even the most valuable gifts. And how easily does the proud man become an object of ridicule. A Greek physician,

Menecrates, had become so famous for his skill, that the people almost worshipped him as a god. This so puffed him up with vanity that he actually took the name Jupiter, and had a number of people to attend and follow him. Philip of Macedon wished to cure him of this folly, so, having invited him to supper, he placed him alone at a splendid table, raised above the rest. But on the table was nothing but an altar, and, while rare and dainty dishes were supplied to the other tables, Menecrates Jupiter had to be satisfied with the smoke of incense burning upon the altar. The new god, seeing that he was mocked, rushed out in a rage, while the other guests only laughed.

HENRY RAWLINGS.

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### THAT'S THE WAY.

Just a little every day,  
     That's the way!  
 Seeds in darkness swell and grow,  
 Tiny blades push through the snow.  
 Never any flower of May  
 Leaps to blossom in a burst.  
 Slowly—slowly—at the first.  
     That's the way!  
 Just a little every day.

Just a little every day,  
     That's the way!  
 Children learn to read and write,  
 Bit by bit, and mite by mite.  
 Never any one, I say,  
 Leaps to knowledge and its power.  
 Slowly—slowly—hour by hour,  
     That's the way!  
 Just a little every day.  
     ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

## Our Band of Hope.

### Its Difficulties and its Pleasures.

**T**O the question, 'What do you do at your Band of Hope meetings?' asked many times before starting our own, the answer usually was, 'Oh, sometimes we have a lecture, or a lantern entertainment, but usually we content ourselves with an address, and then recitations and songs by the members.'

This sounds most encouraging and easy we think; we are all quite new at the work! But there can be no difficulty in getting through an hour if the members themselves are ready to furnish half the entertainment, so we start quite cheerfully.

Soon an evening comes when—the address being over—there are some twenty minutes to fill up, and we ask if any member will give a recitation, expecting so many answers that it will be difficult to choose. A dead silence! Then we request those who can recite to hold up their hands; seven or eight are immediately put up; it is evident that it is only shyness that prevented them from speaking, no one liked to be the first.

A girl is called out who gives her recitation very prettily, and our spirits rise. Then a boy is asked; he comes forward and says to the superintendent in a loud whisper, 'If you please, I had a very nice piece to learn, but I lost the paper so I couldn't learn it all.' It is suggested that he should repeat as much as he does know, so he struggles



through about three lines and then subsides. Tommy Brown is looking up with a bright, eager face, and has evidently something to say, so he stands up, and gives his piece, a very vivid description of the results of drunkenness; we look at each other in dismay, and resolve that no more recitations shall be given without having been previously approved; and we decide to ask for no more that night.

But we are not going to be disheartened by one failure; we talk it over, and appoint one of our workers to take charge of the recitations, and to give out such as are suitable to those who wish to take part in the entertainment. At the next meeting the members are asked who would like to have a recitation to learn? many hands are held up, and when the meeting is over the teacher is surrounded. At last, however, the selections are made, but when the time comes for the pieces to be given, we find to our dismay that some have lost their paper and others haven't taken the trouble to learn them. Happily, however, there are always a few ready and—thanks to the Board School training—these are recited very well.

We do not at all wish to confine ourselves to temperance recitations and dialogues, but it would be a help to meet with a few more really good ones, that would take the brighter and more hopeful side of the question, showing what resolution, and temptation resisted, can do, instead of the sad pictures of the misery caused by intemperance, which to many of these

children—poor little mites—are only too familiar.

The addresses, lectures, and lantern exhibitions, for which we have to thank so many kind friends, are most enjoyable to both children and teachers. Occasionally it does happen that a visitor comes who does not know the children, and who cannot attract them; an unsuitable question may be asked, a silly, random answer is given, and the children all laugh, and a titter is kept up for the rest of the evening; the teachers go home disheartened, vexed with the speaker that he could not interest the children, vexed with the children that they behaved so badly, but most vexed with themselves that they could not keep order.

But this is of rare occurrence, while there are friends who come again and again, the mere mention of whose names brings a look of unmistakable pleasure into the children's faces, and ensures a full attendance and a quiet, happy evening. They are listened to with eagerness, and their bright, simple questions are often answered very smartly and intelligently, showing how the children are following the address or lecture.

The entertainment at Christmas requires a long time to prepare; before the season commences—which is generally early in September—we have first a meeting of the workers, and then another of the Committee. We decide to have a competition. What shall it be? That for the girls is fairly easy, doll-dressing, aprons, mats, patchwork,

drawing, and last but not least, cookery. Oh yes! certainly we'll try some cookery, a cake or a plum pudding. One teacher gives the recipe, and the others try it to see if it is good; several of the elder girls go in for that competition, and the boys *wish* they might.

The boys' subjects are more difficult; there are fewer of them and they are more difficult to please than the girls. But we finally settle on a map, a picture frame, a cardboard model, or a chest of doll's drawers made of match boxes.

Now commence the trials of the teachers. The superintendent gives out the rules and the subjects for competition, and asks for names to be given in to the teachers who specially undertake this part of the work. Two girls give in their names; no boys; this goes on for several meetings, girls' names come in pretty freely, but still no boys! This troubled us at first, but now we are used to it, and know that—boylike—they will wait till the last moment. The teachers attack them individually, and get this sort of excuse, 'I haven't time, I have to go to evening school.' 'How often do you go?' 'Once a week, on Wednesday.' 'That leaves you five evenings a week for about fourteen weeks!' This is an unanswerable argument and we get a promise 'to try.' Another very common excuse is, 'Oh, I can't make the model, or the chest of drawers; I don't know how to use the match boxes, and I haven't got any. A happy thought strikes one of us; I will make a model

and show them what can be done; accordingly at the next meeting we produce a rough specimen. The effect is magical; the boys' names come in fast now.

These difficulties over the pleasure begins. It does one good to see and note the eagerness of the competitors, the endless questions, the way in which the girls try to get together scraps for dolls' clothes or patchwork, or the boys, for cardboard or match boxes; till you begin to wonder if your stock will hold out, and you worry all your friends to help. The result is good, however, for when the all-important night arrives we get a very good show, and some very pretty, nicely made articles.

There is a good deal of fun over the Christmas puddings; of course they must be hot, so they are kept in a big saucepan on the schoolroom fire till the two teachers—a lady and gentleman—who have undertaken to taste them all, arrive; and amid much laughter and burning of fingers, the puddings are lifted out, and duly examined and tasted. The judges in all the competitions having made their awards, the prizes are distributed by the president, amidst the hearty cheers of successful and unsuccessful competitors alike.

Then there is the little play to be acted at the entertainment after the tea—and Mr. Hawkes' plays are admirable for this purpose. How the children enjoy the numberless rehearsals, what pains most of them take to learn their parts, what fun they have at each other's mistakes, and what roars

of laughter when the bear enters in mask and skin at the dress rehearsal! The interest in the dressing up is intense; all our friends are worried and entreated to lend 'a dress, or a coat,' or, 'Have you such a thing—not too good—as a red opera cloak,' etc. Of course it all means work, a good deal of thinking and planning, and the giving up of much time; but the result is worth it, and it is difficult to say who enjoy it most, the children or the teachers.

It is reward enough to see how the parents and friends—especially, but by no means exclusively, of those who are acting—enjoy the entertainment, and their pride and pleasure when 'our Maud' or 'our Willie' come on the stage. If you didn't know who they were before their beaming faces would soon tell you!

I wish parents could realize what a help and encouragement it is when they take and show an interest in their children's performances; how much better a girl or boy acts or recites when 'father and mother' are looking on. All who have anything to do with children know how great is the difference in dealing with those whose parents keep well in touch with their children's work and pleasures, and those who have no one who either knows or cares what they do.

How it cheers you to hear, 'Father heard me say my piece last night, he likes it so much,' or even, 'Mother doesn't care for my piece, she doesn't think it suits me;' how gladly, in the

latter case, you look for another recitation. One boy who went in for a recitation competition—and won the prize, too—recited his two pieces to his father every night for a week before.

So much for the lighter side of the work, but the real object of these meetings, the trying to train up these children to a life of Temperance, to avoid the rock against which so many of their elders have split, is ever before us. We do not always talk directly about it so as to tire them, but most of our addresses and lectures contain at least a few allusions to the subject; and when a new member receives his card of membership we like to repeat and explain the meaning of our pledge: 'To abstain from all intoxicating drink, from the use of tobacco, and from gambling,' with the addition—which reconciled some of us to the idea of little children signing a pledge—'so long as he remains a member of this society.'

Band of Hope work, like all other work of the kind, has its difficulties and disappointments, but it has—to some of us at least—its pleasures, too. The hope that we may do even a little to help these children in the battle of life, to make them strong to resist evil, and to keep their pledge of abstinence even when they cease to be members, or to have any connection with us, encourages us to go on bravely and to try and overcome the difficulties. The constant kindly intercourse between teachers and children, the personal influence gained over many of them, the

interest taken by the members themselves as shown by the regularity of their attendance, by the constant enquiry during the holidays, 'When does the Band of Hope begin again!' and the bright smile and look of recognition with which the teachers are always met; all these form a bond that may prove helpful to teachers as well as to the children, and will make it in fact, as in name, a 'Band of Hope.'

E. J. TITFORD.

### THE BEE.

POEM FOR THE LITTLE ONES.

I LOVE to see the busy bee,  
 I love to watch the hive;  
 When the sun is hot they linger not—  
 It makes them all alive.

God gave them skill, and with good will  
 They to their work attend:  
 Each little cell is shaped so well,  
 That none their work can mend.

Now in, now out, they move about,  
 Yet all in order true;  
 Each seems to know both where to go,  
 And what it has to do.

'Mid summer heat, the honey sweet  
 It gathers while it may,  
 In tiny drops, it never stops  
 To waste its time in play.

I hear it come, I know its hum,  
 It flies from flower to flower;  
 And to its store a little more  
 It adds, each day and hour.

Just so should my heart apply,  
 My proper work to mind:  
 Look for some sweet in all I meet,  
 And store up all I find.

—Selected.

## The Bible and its Meaning.

### I.

#### Why People cannot agree about the Bible.

**T**ILL quite recent years all people who called themselves Christians were agreed to assert that the Bible, Old Testament and New, was God's Word, and therefore all things contained in it were substantially true. Some maintained that every word was directly inspired so that there could by no possibility be the least mistake or error, unless it were by the fault of the copier or translator: all was true as at first written down, numbers, names, dates, as well as visions, prophecies, doctrines. Others held more lax views of inspiration, which allowed for the admission of minor errors on matters of history or science; while some, especially among Unitarians, put forward the theory, that the inspiration or guidance of the Holy Spirit which all admitted, extended only to passages which were concerned with religion or morals: it was for this purpose they said, the revelation was given—to teach things necessary for salvation; and so far as the scriptures did this they were of God, but beyond this they were human documents and recorded merely the beliefs and opinions of the writers.

All Christian Churches were so far at one: even those who were the



most 'advanced,' as we should now say, submitting to the authority of Scripture as supreme, when questions of doctrine were concerned. And they were agreed too as to what constituted Holy Scripture; the Church of Rome indeed maintained against Protestants the inspiration of the Apocryphal Books, but these were of little importance for doctrine; and the books contained in our Bibles to-day were accepted by all alike.

One would suppose then that all Christians would be nearly agreed since all submitted to the same authority; but there came a great difference between them from this, that while the Protestant Churches held that the Bible was the *only* authority 'so that whatsoever is not read therein is not to be required of any man that it should be believed,'<sup>1</sup> Roman Catholics were taught that 'the truth is contained in the written books and in the unwritten traditions, which having been received by the Apostles, either from the mouth of Christ himself or from the dictates of the Holy Spirit, have been handed down even to us.'<sup>2</sup> It is easy therefore to understand that Roman Christians believed many things which were rejected by other Christians, because they avowedly learnt these things, not in the Bible common to them all, but outside the Bible, from the Church or what the Church called 'tradition.'

But how came it that Protestants who were entirely agreed that the *only*

rule of faith was the written word, which they all had in their hands and read continually—how came it that they were divided among themselves from the first, and became more and more divided as time gave further opportunity for the study of these writings? And how is it that now, after nearly four hundred years of controversy, those who stand by the old Protestant rule of 'the Bible and the Bible only' are still at variance among themselves?

The reason of course is that while they agree to submit themselves mind and heart to the words of the Bible, they differ altogether about the meaning of these words.

Is the Bible then such a difficult book to understand? Is its meaning so obscure that it cannot be discovered for certain, even with all the aids of learning and study and prayer? Is it not strange that God himself should have given a book to be the guide of men to eternal salvation, and that those who read it with all diligence cannot be sure what it means? For no modest man ought to be sure, when he knows that others every way as good as himself are not of his opinion about the meaning, 'We can prove from the Bible, or deduce from it,' writes a good Bishop, 'the great doctrines concerning the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Atonement. Original Sin, the grace of the Sacraments, the privileges of the Church, and other weighty and cardinal points of faith;'<sup>1</sup> but he ought, more modestly

<sup>1</sup>Article VI. of the Thirty-nine Articles.

<sup>2</sup> Council of Trent Session IV.

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Harold Browne on the Sixth Article.

and in conformity with the facts, to have said '*We think* we can prove or deduce,' for men who know quite as much about the Bible and are quite as competent judges, have been and are persuaded that none of these are to be fairly deduced from its pages; and also that they are not 'weighty and cardinal points of the faith' taught by Christ, but ancient errors, and corruptions of primitive Christianity.

It seems then to follow that nobody can be really sure what the Bible teaches, and if so there must needs be something wrong about the old rule—the Bible and the Bible only. It can't possibly be that God has appointed a way of salvation, but left it uncertain what that way is, so that with our best endeavours we may go wrong. The fault must be on our side, not on His; it cannot be His Word which is uncertain or obscure, it must be some mistake on our part about what that Word is and where it is to be found.

And if we will put away all our preconceived ideas and simply look for facts, we shall discover at once, and from the Bible itself, two mistakes, and great ones. The first is the common assumption that the Bible is God's Word, a divinely inspired book; whence do we learn this except from 'tradition,' which Protestants won't allow? What text of the Bible says anything about the necessity of believing all that is contained in it? How from the Bible could anyone learn which books do belong to it and are divine, and which are not? That the word of God is to be

found in the Bible is a very different statement; and we know it to be the case, not because the Church says so or texts say so, but by our own spiritual experience, and, if that fails us, by the long experience of Christian people of every Church. There is no book like it; no book ever written has had the marvellous power to stir the souls of men which the Bible owns; if it be true that 'every good gift and every perfect gift is from above,'<sup>1</sup> then assuredly this great gift which Bible writers possessed is rightly enough called inspiration, *i.e.* it is God's spirit which has taught them how and what to write. So far we all believe in the inspiration of the Bible; but it isn't the whole Bible which has this divine quality; a great deal of it doesn't appeal in the least to the soul of man; on the contrary, it often puzzles his intellect to understand, confounds his sense of right and wrong, contradicts his faith in God's love and justice, and is otherwise devoid of any religious or moral interest. Who, for example, could find any spiritual nourishment in the tenth chapter of Genesis or the first chapter of the Book of Chronicles or the story of the Book of Esther? Moreover, it isn't only the Bible which is in part inspired; the same rule which obliges us to refer all that is best in it to God is obligatory in respect of other books also; whatever is good and true and wise and just and uplifting and consoling in the writings of men, is inspired of heaven.

<sup>1</sup> James i. 17.

We may see the two views of inspiration, the old and the new, the 'orthodox' and the 'liberal,' in the two translations of the text in the second epistle to Timothy (ch. iii. ver. 16), where the Authorised Version has it: 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness' (here, however, Scripture cannot have meant more than the Old Testament, for the New did not as yet exist); but in the Revised Version we read, 'Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable, etc.,' which makes spiritual profit the test of divine inspiration; that book is inspired of God which is profitable for instruction in righteousness, which is helpful to its readers in the way of good life.

This is the first and great mistake—the assertion that the Bible is the word of God—and while Unitarians agree with their fellow-Christians in love and esteem for the Bible as a whole, they utterly refuse to be bound by it in such a way; namely, that whatever can be proved by texts they must acknowledge to be true, however difficult it may be to believe, or however repugnant to their moral sense.

And the second mistake is to suppose that the Bible is one book, with one doctrine throughout it. Everyone knows that it is not so, and yet somehow almost everyone talks as if it were so. It is really two collections of short books, the older collection

Hebrew, the newer one, Greek; the former contains legends, traditions, stories, laws, national annals, hymns, preachings; the latter, lives of Christ, stories of his apostles, letters, and a book of visions. All these are bound up now in one volume, but originally they existed apart and had no connection with one another. It could not therefore, happen, except by miracle, a miracle for which we have no testimony, that all these writers should agree in all respects with one another and teach one same doctrine.

And now we can understand why it has been that good and learned men have never been able to agree about what the Bible taught: they have used it as it never was meant to be used, and they have tried to get out of it what was not in it—a complete and harmonious system of doctrine. So now when it is asked, What does the Bible teach? our answer will be, the Bible consists of a great many different books, and teaches many different things,—some which have to do with religion and some which have nothing to do with religion;—some which we accept as true and helpful, and some which we put aside, having learnt better of God and of His ways with men.

## II.

### How to Interpret the Bible.

The Bible as a whole is a simple book, which anyone of ordinary intelligence can understand; but in every part of it we meet with passages which

are difficult and obscure, and the more carefully we read, the more numerous will these passages appear. And for this there are three reasons; first, that it is written in languages which are strange to us; however well acquainted we may be with a foreign language it is never the same as our own, and there will always occur doubts and difficulties about the exact meaning of this and that word or phrase. If the languages are ancient as well as foreign, this will be still more frequently the case.

Secondly, not only are we often uncertain what the words mean; we cannot be always sure what the original words were; the text is corrupt, as we say; there are various 'readings' proposed, and perhaps none of them give a satisfactory sense. We can easily understand how this would happen before the days of printing, when all books were copied by hand;—perhaps the first who made a copy was not quite sure, or left out some words, or made a mistake in reading or writing—the second tried to correct but wasn't quite sure how to do so, and the third tried another way, and so on. The result is that sometimes it is difficult to make sense out of a passage as we have it now, very often it is impossible to determine how it stood originally.

And the third reason, which is the most important and applies to every book of the Bible, even the most easy, is that the writers lived under conditions so very different from ours; their

habits, their education, their way of thinking, all their surroundings were as foreign to ours as their language is. Now to know what a speech or a writing means you must put yourself in the place of the speaker or writer, you must try and see what he saw, feel as he felt, think as he thought. You must become a Jew, and a Jew of Palestine, and a Jew of two thousand years ago, to understand what such men wrote. You must imagine yourself now an exile from your native land 'by the waters of Babylon'; now the subject of a heathen king trying hard to force idolatry upon 'God's people'; now a taxpayer ground down under the weight of foreign tribute. You must in each case realise the circumstances under which the book or passage was written, before you can hope to understand its right meaning.

But what is the right meaning? 'Why, what the words rightly understood convey to our minds,' you will perhaps answer; and indeed this has been generally assumed by all readers, even the most learned. But it is not so. The real meaning of any text is that which the speaker or writer meant by it,—what the words signified to him, and what he wished them to signify to his hearers or readers—and often this is very difficult to discover.

Take for an example Paul's direction to the Church at Corinth about praying or preaching in the meeting for worship; he says men should have their heads uncovered, but the women should be veiled, and he gives for



reason, 'for this cause ought the woman to have authority on her head, because of the angels'; now no doubt Paul knew very well what he meant, and was sure that those to whom he wrote would understand him; but we cannot understand it without great difficulty; we must think about the relation of men and women as they did in Paul's time, and we must know what the custom was about women wearing veils, and what was intended by it, and moreover we must discover Paul's ideas about the angels and their presence and office in public worship. Otherwise, we can, with a little ingenuity, make out a meaning which will suit the words, but it won't be Paul's meaning, and therefore it will be the wrong meaning.

So, again, when Paul writes about 'the law,' as he continually does, we cannot understand what he means, unless we realise what the Law was to the Jew—how much it meant for him, how constant was the obligation it imposed, how his 'righteousness' consisted in keeping it, how burdensome and unmeaning its prescriptions often were. If you do not know this, and bear it in mind, you may make Paul a teacher of immorality, as if his object had been to free men from the yoke of duty, and from the subjection always due to the dictates of conscience.

In a word, the great rule of interpretation—the only way to find the meaning of any passage in the Bible or elsewhere—is, *Put yourself in the*

*writer's place*: what did *he* mean? That is the question you must ask yourself, and not,—what should I mean by the same words?

And now we come to the most important conclusion from what we have laid down. It doesn't, after all, matter very much to us, what Isaiah or what Paul meant in this or that disputed text. It does matter very much to all who call themselves Christians, what Jesus Christ meant; what he taught his disciples and would teach us if he were now with us.

### III.

#### The Real Teachings of Jesus.

'Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man,' said Jesus, and one would have thought that would prevent all controversy among his followers; the true faith would be to believe in his sayings, and the right life would be to act in accordance with them.

But the Christian Churches have never agreed on this very simple rule, and even those who sincerely desire to do so find many difficulties, when they once begin to try to carry it out. For, unfortunately, it is not given to any of us to hear him speak; we can only read, or hear read to us, an ancient report of 'these sayings,'—a report not written till years after they were spoken, certainly imperfect as regards completeness, and as certainly inaccurate at times, unless we make

the wholly gratuitous supposition that the memory of the reporters was miraculously protected from slip or failure.

And, besides, even if it were possible somehow to recover the very words which Jesus used, and not miss or mistake one of them, still we should be reading what was said, not to us, English Christians of the nineteenth century, but to poor Galilean peasants and fishermen, Jews subject to the despotic sway of heathen Rome, and in all their circumstances utterly unlike our own.

The problem for true Christians of to-day, that is for all people who really desire to live in such way as Jesus would approve, is first to discover what he really did say, and then to apply his precepts to the wholly changed conditions of modern life. In a word, to find out what he would preach to us if he had been born thirty years ago in an English village, instead of 1,900 years ago in Nazareth of Galilee. We have, as it were, in our possession a great treasure, consisting of coins of Judæa of the time of Pilate and Herod; they are gold, silver, copper, they are genuine and spurious, —it is our business to examine and test them, and get full value for them in coins of Queen Victoria. Till we do that they are only a curiosity, interesting to the historian and collector, but of no use for our daily life. So must we treat the gospels, take each saying ascribed to Jesus, and ask, —did he really say just this, or is it

more likely something of his disciples' which they afterwards thought he must have said? And then, if it is indeed the Master's own word, what did he mean? and what does it mean for me in particular?

It is far from easy to answer these two questions, and people in general first assume that the gospels are never mistaken about the words or deeds of Jesus, and then pass over whatever they don't understand or don't like, as if, though divine, it were still of no value. It is wisdom only which can solve the problem aright, a wisdom learnt chiefly in the school of experience, by patient effort to live a Christian life, and learnt only by those whose minds are not closed against all learning. For the best people may be very foolish if they are determined never to learn anything contrary to what they have once accepted as true. But there are certain considerations to be borne in mind in reading the gospels which will greatly help us to a right understanding of them, and at the same time furnish us with a truthful and reasonable answer to many of the objections made against the teaching of Jesus.

(1.) We must try to put ourselves in the circumstances of those to whom Jesus spoke. We are a free nation, wholly independent of foreign control; we enjoy general prosperity, and security of life and property, we have a share in the popular government, and have entire freedom of speech; all of us are equal before the law, and all

taxed alike according to our means, without any consideration of our rank, or office, or nationality. In all these respects, as in many others, it was very different with the Jews of the time of Jesus. Cruel oppression and fanatical rebellion, miserable and widespread poverty, exceptional and ill-gained wealth, legal extortion and violent robbery, utter uncertainty of goods, of bread, of life itself, this was all chronic in the land. 'Soldiers ravaged, robbers and slaves swarmed and plundered, and the most frightful disorder prevailed.' Such is the description given of the state of things in the youth of Jesus, when the Romans took possession of the country, and so it continued till the end came, sometimes a little better, sometimes a little worse. There was no landed aristocracy, there were no great manufacturers, or wealthy merchants; the only highway to riches and influence was by selling oneself to the foreigner as a publican or taxgatherer, or in other mean ways getting his favour. Thus it might well come to pass that all rich men were regarded as oppressors, and woe pronounced against them; while the only way to enjoy peace and do righteously seemed to be to live from day to day, trusting God for the morrow. Better give away all than put it by, to fall most likely into the hands of those who, with or without legal authority, would 'break through and steal.' When all were poor together, and thrift was only a

doubtful speculation, what better advice could be given than to make common cause, and share and share alike? 'Give to every one that asketh of you,'—the want is pretty sure to be genuine, and what else would you do with the little you have? Save and save, and get rich in time? There is no honest way of getting rich, or so difficult is it, that 'it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God;' for he would have to begin by making amends to all whom he had wronged or defrauded, and would find himself probably a poor man before he had done all his conscience demanded of him. No doubt there were exceptions, and Jesus admitted it, 'what is impossible with man is possible with God;' but such was the general impression made upon the mind by a survey of the rich of his time, and the various ways by which they had come to their riches. Obviously, then, all the sayings of Jesus about the rich and poor, about giving and saving, about submission to wrong, and passive obedience to authority, apply only in a very distant way to us and our present conditions of life.

(2.) We must bear in mind that many of the sayings of Jesus were addressed, not to the people at large, but to those who were, or desired to be, his helpers in a great and—it seemed—almost impossible work; a work which demanded the most entire devotion, the most complete concentra-

tion of every faculty and energy. In times that were evil and desperate, to establish upon earth a kingdom of heaven—such was his mission, and to assist him he had only poor and ignorant peasants. If success was to be attained, it would require the straining of every nerve, as men do strain who try to raise a load which is beyond their strength. Those who really wanted to be his partners must leave everything else, give up everything which distracted or hindered them; the ties of nature are strong and sacred, but this was a cause worth more than all, and for the sake of which a man must seem as if he hated all and had forgotten all,—father, mother, wife, children, property.

But these sayings, which sound so harsh, do not apply to us, unless we should be placed in circumstances where a call was made upon us for heroic effort, as at times a man is called on even now to risk his life and the welfare of his family who depend on him, and must act as though he hated them, or else shirk his duty for love of them. It is so with a fireman entering a burning building to save life, or a doctor or nurse exposing themselves to some deadly disease.

(3.) We know from the gospels themselves that the disciples often failed to understand Jesus aright. He spoke figuratively and they took it literally, as when he warned them against 'the leaven of the Scribes and Pharisees,' and they thought it was because they had 'taken no bread;'

he spoke in parables, and they did not know what he intended by even so simple a parable as that of the Sower and the Seed; they never, while he lived, got to understand what he meant by 'the kingdom of God is within you,' and his warnings about his death seem to have fallen on deaf ears. Now this, their inferiority to him, and inability to rise to the level of his thought and teaching, must have, to some extent, perverted their remembrances of his teaching, made them believe that he had said what they thought, and promised what they desired, and meant what they comprehended. Perhaps it was in this way that some of the stories of miracles grew up; they may have originated in parables which were told without explanation and accepted as stories of real occurrences.

(4.) We must always remember that we have not a verbatim report of the sayings of Jesus, taken by a shorthand writer and corrected by himself, (as in Mr. Gladstone's or Mr. Bright's published speeches), but only what was remembered of them and told from one to another, and not set down in writing for many years after his death.

And so we may be sure of these three things at least. (i.) That we have but a very small part of what Jesus said: 'he went about preaching in the synagogues of Galilee' and 'great multitudes came together to hear him,' and on one occasion it is told how they stayed with him all day till the sun set; and they were faint



from want of food, for they had forgotten their ordinary mealtime, so entranced were they by his words. Now all the discourses in the four gospels could be read through easily in an hour; it is certain therefore that Jesus must have spoken much which has not come down to us. (ii.) That what is preserved to us are the sayings which were the most striking and seemingly paradoxical; for it is these which would make most impression at the time and be most surely remembered. It is so to-day, even with our great facilities for reporting. Many of a speaker's remarks will be omitted, or even if recorded will receive no attention, but let him give utterance to some sentiment which seems strange or exaggerated, and he may be sure of both report and attention. (iii.) That the sayings we have are not only a mere selection of a few out of many, but they are taken separate from their natural context, explanations, limitations, and presented to us in a bald isolation, which does them injustice. The Sermon on the Mount, for example, can never have been spoken as we read it now, ranging in some twenty minutes over the whole field of religion and morals. It is but a collection of maxims uttered doubtless on many occasions, and often perhaps only, as it were, the texts of long and thrilling discourses.

If then we read the sayings of Jesus with the reverence due to so great a teacher, the reverence which is best shown by our carefulness to enter

into his true meaning and spirit, we shall always consider—

(a) The circumstances under which he spoke.

(b) The great and peculiar work he had in hand.

(c) The necessary imperfection of the record.

I think if we do so, we shall find difficulties disappear; objections will be answered; and not, as often is the case, dishonestly evaded; and our own souls will be penetrated with a sense of the enduring power and truth of the Master's teaching.

And so, too, we must read all the Bible,—the Psalms, the Prophets, the Epistles. We must also remember that we are reading a translation, and a translation of what men wrote under very different circumstances to our own.

CHARLES HARGROVE.

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'We seek

The worth of ministry, the comeliness  
Of use. Suns would we be, not merely moons;  
And in our hearts would hold the mystery  
Of thy begotten light; nor shine, as now,  
Only as shined upon, not luminous.  
Noblest it is to serve, we know, nor aught  
Beside ennobling; growth and use are wed  
In thine appointment perfect. We would  
grow;

Mightier would be to reproduce thy thought,  
Larger would be as vessels of thy love.  
O Father, let us go; let us fulfil  
The largest, deepest destiny of life,  
And, floating on the tides of thine intent,  
Come with thy rounding purpose unto fruit,  
And ripen with a ripening universe.'

D. A. WASSON—'The Babes of God.'

## Illustrative Anecdote.

### The Shipwrecked Sailors.

'EACH FOR ALL.'



**A**STORM at sea, and a ship driven from her course. The mast was overboard and now a leak was discovered and the sea was rushing in. The captain, finding that it was impossible to save the ship, gave orders to launch the two boats, to put some food and necessaries in them, and then the crew, all having got in, to push off and leave the sinking vessel. It was night, and orders were given to remain near until daylight, in the hope of obtaining a further supply of water and provisions from the wreck. But when morning came little was seen but a few floating timbers and wreckage on the surface of the water, and nothing more of any use to the shipwrecked sailors could be saved. A further misfortune happened; one of the boats was struck by a heavy wave and overturned. Assistance was at once given by the other boat's crew, who were fortunately able to save all their comrades with the exception of the first mate. There were now fourteen men on a small boat, with a very limited supply of food and water, possibly a thousand miles from the nearest land, and the captain incapable, from illness, of taking command. The second mate quietly took over the control, the crew obeying his orders as if on board ship.

The food and water were carefully set on one side under the charge of a sailor, and the crew was divided up into watches, each one taking his turn in the working of the boat. Twice during the day rations of food were served out, the mate dividing up the quantity into fourteen parts, and then calling upon the men, with closed eyes, to claim share after share, as called out. Four spoonfuls of water were given out to each, morning and evening. Three days passed, and the captain was dying. He begged for a little water; it was given to him and then he sank down and quietly passed away. In spite of their danger and sufferings the men showed their affectionate regard to their late leader,—the mate endeavoured to recall and repeat the words used at the graveside in his homeland, and the men joined in the little service so far as they could, singing a hymn together at its conclusion.

Days and weeks passed and still no land or sail had been seen. Rain had fortunately fallen and, by spreading out the sail, a small addition to their stock of drinking-water had been obtained. The same discipline, order, and sharing alike among the weaker and stronger ones prevailed. A month had gone by, the supply of food was exhausted and the crew were worn out by want of nourishment, by exposure, and by anxious watching for sight of land. Another day or two and all would be over. But now land appeared at last, tree tops, and then the sandy beach of a small island, on to which the boat is

driven by the force of the wind. There it falls to pieces, worn out as much as the passengers were that it had carried, and these, in twos and threes,—they could not walk alone,—scrambled on to the shore.

Their reception was at first unfriendly, the natives threatening them with violence; but soon, understanding the pitiable condition of their shipwrecked visitors, they led them to their huts, set food before them, and treated them hospitably. Little by little the men recovered from their long and perilous journey, all except one man, who died soon after reaching the island, of the privations he had undergone. This island was very small in extent, the mate declared that he could walk round it in twenty minutes. There were but five inhabitants, who had remained behind from a colonising experiment made there some short time ago for the sake of the guano deposit. The venture had failed and the settlement had been given up. Cocoonut palms, bananas, and fish, supplied food; and in addition the islanders cultivated a small field of maize, and were possessed of some pigs and chickens. But now there was a larger family to keep, and although any day a passing ship might take the sailors off, they all set to work to do something towards the general support. They built themselves a hut, cut roads, helped in the fishing and cultivation of the land. Turtle sometimes abounded on the coast, and the mate suggested that these should be taken and stored in a

small inland pond in case of other food becoming scarce.

Many a sail came in sight during their long stay, but the men were unable to attract the attention of the passing ship. Nearly a year went by, and then at last the signals made were noticed by a steamship passing near, and her course was directed towards the land. The mate in the boat, the property of the islanders, rowed out and asked the captain of the ship to take him and his twelve companions to the nearest port, offering in place of passage money to provision the vessel with turtle. The bargain was made, and the shipwrecked sailors, taking a friendly leave of their kind hosts, came on board the steamer and were safely brought on to Sydney, and thence to London.

It was there that their story was told, the evening before their departure for their own country, Norway.

I. P.

### TO THE WATER LILY.

O STAR on the breast of the river,  
O marvel of bloom and grace,  
Did you fall straight down from heaven  
Out of the sweetest place?

Nay, nay, from the ooze of the river  
I won my glory and grace,  
White souls fall not, O my poet;  
They rise to the sweetest place.

—Selected.

## The Teacher's Use of English Literature for Illustration.



PROBABLY the hardest part of a teacher's work is the finding of illustrations. Without these the lesson often seems to be but a vain beating of the air, the actual point of contact with life is missing, and of all distasteful things to the young, probably the obviously moral, given in abstract form, stands first. But how and where to find concrete examples is generally the teacher's greatest trouble. Books of brief stories and anecdotes are published, but how often they bear a goody-goody, unreal twang about them, as though they had 'happened' for the purpose of reaching Sunday scholars. The teacher wants something more energetic, more vital, and perhaps he is able to find this in some branch of study he has made his own. Perhaps the reading of scientific works, or undertaking some definite line of scientific experiment or research, may provide many of the pictures needed for the mind to grasp moral truths. The Bible itself, of course, gives an abundance of variety to many teachers, though children are always prone to think themselves unfairly treated if the stories are all out of the Bible. The daily newspaper, too, is a large field of topical illustration; it brings out the great truths

with a forcefulness that cannot be over-valued; the valiant act of soldier or miner that happened yesterday comes to the listener with a convincing freshness. And many other gardens of illustration exist for the watchful teacher. But one which ought never to be neglected is the many coloured one of English literature. It possesses flowers of every kind, appealing to every circumstance of life, and barred, usually, by no such difficulties of language as may occur in reading the Bible. It need give the one who uses it no qualms and fears of treading on critical ground; no dread of quoting the less authentic of two accounts, as may happen in Old Testament stories. He has before him a whole realm, native to him in thought and speech, and (for his purpose) wonderfully given to the concrete. From Chaucer to Tennyson, to speak only of the poets, stories of events and lives abound. Our language has been mainly the mouthpiece of *activities*, and this is what the teacher wants. Other things may appeal to him. There is, for instance, the actual moral worth of style, particularly when it is concise, epigrammatic. We all know the value of a well-expressed line, and how many times it will recur at moments when it is most needed. And a teacher will not consider that time is wasted which is spent in emphasising such lines as George Herbert's 'He who aims at stars shoots higher far than he who means a tree'; or Browning's 'A brute I



might have been, but would not sink in the scale'; or Milton's 'Each on himself relied, as only in his arm the strength of victory lay.' Such lines are moral triumphs for those who wear them on the mind and heart. But they are only a small part of the gift of our literature to teachers, for from its pages can be drawn incidents and developed thoughts that give a flood of light which grows with every passage known. Take our poetry, for example. There is no lesson a teacher can give which will not receive an added beauty by wise use of the poets. You are trying to arouse the faculty of observation in your class. You have spoken of Christ's ready use of natural objects in his addresses; perhaps you have quoted his appeal, 'Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow;' and the lesson will not be soon forgotten which closes with a careful reading of the one of Wordsworth's poems 'To the Daisy' which shows us the poet lying on the grass, bending over the tiny flower, and playing with similes the daisy suggests—now 'a nun demure, of lowly port,'—'a queen in crown of rubies drest,' or

'A silver shield with boss of gold  
That spreads itself, some faery bold  
In fight to cover.'

or

'Like a star, with glittering crest,  
Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest,'

and closing his images with a desire for something of the flower's own lowly peacefulness.

'Sweet silent creature!  
That breath'st with me in sun and air,  
Do thou, as thou art wont, repair  
My heart with gladness, and a share  
Of thy meek nature!'

The youngest will be able to follow the pretty similes, or will need but the lightest of help. From this class of nature-poems every season in the year can be illuminated for the child's mind, and a rich store of poetic thoughts be added to the little eyes when they look out upon nature. And what a tenderness is evoked by most of our true nature-singers. The springs of pity which they touch in the young heart will count weightily in true teaching. It would be a helpful lesson which told the story of Burns,—the golden genius of his song threading the dark canvas of his weak life,—and closed with a picture of the ploughman poet deeply saddened at the sight of the poor mouse's nest destroyed by the plough. Given slight Anglicising of the Scottish dialect, and the children would surely be touched to kindness and pity over the story of the 'Wee, sleekit, cow'rin, tim'rous beastie' with his 'wee bit housie, too, in ruin.'

Then, too, the poems of legend might be used, and these provide an almost inexhaustible supply of illustrative material. The great acts of devotion, personal consecration, unselfishness, which are enshrined in such stories as Lowell's 'Vision of Sir Launfal,' Whittier's 'Tritemius' and 'The Two Rabbis,' or Tennyson's 'Telemachus' will, by the aid of the

poems, stir towards realisation in the listeners if the teacher reads with sympathetic intelligence. And for the older scholars our more distinctively 'thought' poems will be used with advantage, a lesson on 'the broad spirit of tolerance' being closed by the reading of Clough's 'Ah, yet consider it again,' or Matthew Arnold's 'Progress'; or a talk about 'the existence of evil' ending with some passages from 'In Memoriam,' such as

'Oh yet we trust that somehow good  
Will be the final goal of ill,  
To pangs of nature, sins of will,  
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood.

'That not a worm is cloven in vain;  
That not a moth with vain desire  
Is shrivell'd in a fruitless fire,  
Or but subserves another's gain.

'Behold, we know not anything.  
I can but trust that good shall fall  
At last—far off—at last, to all,  
And every winter change to spring.'

But beside poetry in England's literature there is the whole range of prose story-telling which the teacher may draw from. There are few teachers who do not read some good novels in the course of every year, and yet it may not have occurred to them to use these for their class. Just as the stories of some of Shakespeare's plays are full of illustrative bits of character that have a tonic value, so most of the really good novels in our language may well be used. Nothing could better show the awfulness of hatred when once it gets complete control of a man than is seen in

Buchanan's story, 'God and the Man,' And, of the hundreds of our teachers who read 'Robert Elsmere,' how many use the characters of the book in their lessons? Yet each of them was typical, and if a boy or girl had been shown the ruin wrought by intellectual pride (in the Squire), or the unfruitful indifference of Langham, or the brave religious bearing of Robert, such things could not have been without influence. Or, if the choosing of representative characters and events from a novel is too difficult for some, there are so many excellent collections of short stories which might be used, such as Olive Schreiner's 'Dreams' or Eugene Field's 'Book of Stories,' or the classic tales re-told by Hawthorn in 'Tanglewood Tales,' by Kingsley in 'The Heroes,' or by A. J. Church in any of his beautifully written volumes. The range of illustrations here is unlimited. But there is one other division of literature a teacher may frequently use, and that is one we never tire of, whatever our age—biography. A good biography, read carefully by the teacher, and assimilated in such a way that, with the aid of notes, he can re-tell passages from it, will always be of immense service. Let a teacher become really at home with a few great lives, and he will have at hand, and constantly springing up ready for use, a valuable store of example. Is he emphasising bravery, then the story of Havelock, Gordon, Luther, or Cromwell will arise in his mind. Devotion to truth will be

illuminated by Savonarola, Robertson of Brighton, Theodore Parker, Tolstoi. The need of will-power for success in life will be illustrated perhaps by such terrible failures as De Quincey and Coleridge. To be familiar with some of the biographical masterpieces is to be well armed as a teacher. And in reading them the note book should be regarded as a necessary adjunct. There references can be jotted down for passages to be re-read, similar incidents that occur to the reader be noted, and short summaries of striking events be made. This should be the method of helping the memory even when the books are owned by the reader (which is not perhaps so much needed in these days of the free library); for the stories, to be useful to the class, have really to be possessed by the teacher's mind, and not merely by his or her shelf.

So used, our literature, both in its prose and its poetry, will give just the vigour to the lesson which the teacher often feels is wanting. The mind, in its early stages at any rate, demands a definiteness, a form, in all teaching; the truth must be made to assume a certain shape before it can be realised; in other words, illustration is needed to concentrate the teaching from a cloud into a star. The moral or spiritual idea needs that motive power which the true illustration gives. Not a mere tale, no idle story-telling, but the conveying of a truth by means of a poem or a story which will go ringing through the mind to brace the

will. Of such helps the teacher who seeks will find our English literature a rich and delightful treasure-house.

EDGAR DAPLYN.

## Look Beyond the Present Time.

A FLOWER PARABLE.



WAY, away in a far country dwelt a beautiful princess. She lived in a palace of snow-white marble which stood in the midst of magnificent gardens. Everyone loved the beautiful princess, for she was as good as she was beautiful; and when the sunshine of her approving smile shone upon man or woman, boy or girl, who had done any deed of kindness or of courage, the winner of the smile felt that he or she had received the richest prize that could be won.

Now the princess loved one little corner of her garden better than all the rest, for there the good gardener used to plant all the simple flowers that she had learnt to love when she was a little child. Already the spring time had come and the seeds had been carefully taken down from the shelf and put into the ground; but the poor things felt chilled in the damp earth, and they began to murmur.

'How horrid it is down here,' cried the Sunflower seed. 'So dark and damp, and miserable! We were much better off when we were neatly packed up on the greenhouse shelf, I'm sure!'

'Ah!' said the Poppy, 'but if we had kept up there, we should not have had a chance of pleasing our princess, and winning her smile; only think of the joy of that!'

'That's all very well,' retorted the Sunflower, 'but I want to be comfortable now.'

'It is too bad,' grumbled the Lupin. 'The gardener promised us a place in the princess' favourite corner, and of course I thought we should have been laid where she could see us; and instead of that here we are, poked out of the way right down in the dark. How are we to see the princess here, I should like to know, and how is it possible to feel the warmth of her smile light upon us. It is most unfair!' and the little round ball of a seed tried to wriggle itself upwards; but it was useless; he had to remain where the gardener had put him.

Now a tiny, but very sweet little voice was heard. 'Friends,' it cried, 'have patience; as Cousin Poppy says, let us look beyond the present. I now remember that dear mother used to tell me that before we could grow and become really beautiful, and fit to win the smile of the princess, we should have to pass through dark and rainy days; perhaps she was thinking of this, though I did not understand her at the time.'

'You dear foolish little Reseda,' laughed her companions. 'As if any good could come to anyone from lying in the damp and darkness.' 'And as for me,' added the Lupin, 'I should be

dead with rheumatism by now if I had not my brown great coat on.'

And as the days went by Poppy tried to pass the weary time in sleep, little Reseda by sweet thought and cheering words of the good time coming, while the others, I am sorry to say, spent their days in grumbling.

At last a terrible calamity happened; the serviceable great coats, that the master gardener had given each little seed to hug round itself, all split through. Loud were the moanings of Lupin and Sunflower, but cries were useless; their coats were forced open, and they found themselves sending forth a little point upwards.

'Oh dear! oh dear!' cried the Lupin, 'just as I was getting used to being here, something else is happening to me. Now my little tender body will be thrust outside the earth and my great coat will be left behind. I wish they would let me alone.'

But the poppy woke up, and the reseda looked happy. 'Why we are growing, we are growing,' they sung. 'What matters it if we do have to face the wind and the rain for a little while, if it makes us fit to appear before the princess. Besides the good gardener will take care that we don't come really to grief.' And the two little seedlings sung together—

We are growing, we are growing,  
Never mind the rest;  
Good things follow after sowing  
If we do our best.

And the singing cheered their comrades, and by the time the song was



finished all had joined in with the last chorus, and were happy. Gradually each tiny seedling burst through the earth and the warm rays of the sun cheered and blessed it. So the days passed on; and though now and then a storm of rain and wind would make the little plants shake and shiver, yet whenever one began to murmur the little reseda would bid him look beyond the present to the happy future. Each day brought fresh strength and beauty into their young lives, and soon the buds appeared which were to grow into the flowers; and then when the flowers came they felt that they might perhaps be worthy to be introduced to the princess.

Thus it happened. On one sunshiny morning voices were heard in the distance, and presently the Princess and her maidens drew near. How the ears of the seedlings—now most of them little no longer—tingled with delight as they heard their beloved mistress say, 'Come with me now and see the dearest corner in all my garden. Each year I wait until I know that my flowers are ready for me, and then I go to see them,—this morning my gardener has said that they are all ready, and so I have brought you to enjoy my own dear flowers with me.'

Oh! how glad our seedlings were now. The sunflower turned its large yellow face to the princess and bowed before her; and she smiled on him. The blue lupin, sorry for his sin of murmuring, did his best to stand

upright before his royal mistress; and his repentance was also blessed with a smile of sunshine, while the poppies bright with red, and yellow and white blossoms, fairly shook with delight and excitement when they, too, received the royal smile. And the little reseda, smaller than all the rest, was she to be overlooked? Nay, nay, the princess knows too well her favourite subjects; see, she turns, kneels down, and buries her face in the green bed of lowly flowers, drinking in their sweet perfume. 'Little darling, little darling,' she cried, 'see, you shall come to me and be carried on my bosom.'

Then the other flowers called out in tones of delight—for no one is jealous in flowerland, whatever other faults may be found there. 'You are right, Princess, you are right; the little reseda cheered us, and bade us look beyond, when all was so dark and dreary that we were murmuring at what our good gardener had done with us. Ah! this hour of joy is worth all our suffering, and we might never have lived to see it if it had not been for reseda.'

Once more the princess bent over the tiny flower whose only answer was the breathing forth of the sweetest scent imaginable. And it was decreed thenceforth, that reseda's name among all lovers of flowers should be 'little darling.' And so it still remains, and we call it to-day 'Mignonette, Mignonette,'—which is the French word for 'little darling.'

AUNT AMY.

## Writing Life's Copy Book.

A WORD TO THE CHILDREN.

**D**O you see what I have in my hand? Two copy-books—yes. Well, I want you to look at them with me for a minute or two. Let us take this one first. See, I open it at this page—though almost any other page in it would do as well. You don't need to be very near to it to guess what sort of a boy he was who wrote *this* page. Blots—carelessly-formed, badly-joined letters—dirty finger-marks,—you know what all these mean. They tell, as plainly as any page can speak, of slovenliness, of carelessness, of the writer's lack of a real, true endeavour to do his best. That is very clear, is it not? Now let us look at our other book, and this one, too, we may open at any page. What a difference here! Here are no blots, no ill-formed letters, no dirty finger-marks; but everywhere are the signs of painstaking care, of tidiness, of a real desire on the part of the writer to do his best. Oh, yes, you might find many a page in many another copy-book written *better*,—better, that is, as we usually speak of writing being *good* or *bad*—but there is something about this boy's work which, to the teacher who can truly judge, speaks of what he is always looking and hoping for—and more than this no teacher has a right to expect—the best his pupil can do.

I have purposely chosen two very

different books, and I want you to try to keep these two pictures—the pictures of these two pages—clearly in your minds while I speak to you of the lessons they have for us all.

\* \* \*

Now, you have all, I dare say, heard Life—the life we live here—described in many ways, or likened to many different things. Some have called it a *battle*. Charles Dickens, for example, who wrote so many fine books, which I hope you will all read some day, wrote one—a Christmas story—which he called *The Battle of Life*; and some of you, I have no doubt, have read or heard that little poem by Miss Adelaide Anne Procter (who wrote, you remember, the beautiful hymn, 'One by one the sands are flowing') in which she speaks of it in the same way.<sup>1</sup> A child is asking its father what Life is.

'What is Life, Father?'

'A Battle, my child,

Where the strongest lance may fail,  
Where the wariest eyes may be beguiled,  
And the stoutest heart may quail.  
Where the foes are gathered on every hand  
And rest not day or night,  
And the feeble little ones must stand  
In the thickest of the fight.'

Some, again, have called it a *school*; the apostle Paul is fond of speaking of it as a *race*; while in a pretty little story I read once it is very truly and beautifully described as a *beginning*. It has been likened, rightly or wrongly, to many other things—a song, a nursery, a garden, a dream. But I

<sup>1</sup> 'Life and Death,

want you to think of it just now as a *copy-book*—a copy-book which we have all, young and old alike, to write.

You know how you feel when you begin your copy-book at school. You make up your mind that you are going to do your best, that you will try to please your teacher and satisfy yourself, that each page—nay, each line—shall be better than the last. You begin with a clean page—a page without a blot, without a single dirty mark, without a badly-formed stroke or carelessly-written word. Well, that is just how you began life. For have you never thought that *there was a time once when we had—each one of us—never done a single wrong thing, or spoken a single evil word, or thought a single evil thought?* That was when we began to write our copy-book. Every act since has been a letter, a word, or a line. I wonder what our copy-books are like now—what they will be like when we have written the last line.

You know why they are called *copy-books*, don't you? Because, at the top of the page—or, sometimes, on the blackboard—there is a model line which you have to try to imitate. You have to try to write your lines as much like that special one as you can. Well, just so there are 'top-lines' in Life's Copy-Book. It may be a dear mother or father whom you try to be like, a dearly-loved friend or play-mate, or some one you have read about in history or in your story-books. There is *one* whom we can all take as our 'top-line'—the purest and best of men

—our 'Great Example' we call him sometimes: Jesus. You have, no doubt, heard grown-up people talking about their 'ideals,' and I dare say you have not understood, but have often wondered, what they meant. Well, these 'ideals' are the 'top-lines' of their copy-books—the good people or the good and noble lives they are trying to be like or to copy. 'Being true to our ideal,' then, means—remember this always—doing our best at all times to imitate the 'top-line' of our copy-book, and to have in it no blots, no careless writing, nothing, indeed, that will make us think that we have not done all we ought to have done.

When a man has been leading a bad or foolish life, and has made up his mind that he will do better in the future, we generally say—what? That he has 'turned over a new leaf,' don't we? And we mean by this that, he is going to begin again. He is not going to be downhearted because of his failures, his mistakes, his sins of the past, but he is going to make a fresh start, and see if he cannot make up for his former wrong-doing by living a nobler, truer life in the future. Well, you need not wait until you are men and women, or until you have done much wrong or have committed many sins, before you determine to start afresh. You may 'turn over a new leaf' of your copy-book to-morrow morning—nay, you will actually do this. And so every morning, when you rise from your bed, you should say to yourselves, 'To-day I commence a

new page in my copy-book. It is clean, without a blot or a dirty mark. How am I going to write it? What will it be like when night has come and I have written my last line?’

A great and good man called George Herbert, who wrote many sweet and tender poems, said in one of them<sup>1</sup>—and I should like you all to learn and remember these two lines,—

‘Sum up at night what thou hast done by day;

And in the morning, what thou hast to do.’

That is to say: When the day is over, look at your copy-book, on the page which you have written that day, and think whether you have done your best. Consider what mistakes you have made, and see where you might have done better. And then, when the next morning comes, think of the resolutions you made the night before, and make up your mind that to-day’s page shall be better written than yesterday’s. Never mind the badly-written pages of the days or years gone by—you can’t un-write *them*. Don’t be downhearted because you have not done well in the past, but try to make up for those poor attempts by better ones in the future. ‘Ah, but,’ you say, ‘my own writing—however hard I try—is so poor, so bad, compared with the writing in so many copy-books I see. I shall never write like that.’ Perhaps you are thinking this while I am saying these words. But, dear children, I want you to remember

that the wise teacher, as I told you at the beginning, judges his pupils’ work by the amount of care and pains and patient effort each has put into it, and by the way each has used the talents which God has given him. How true are those words of the Bible: ‘For the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart,’<sup>1</sup> Yes, *God looks on the heart*. That is to say, He sees what you really and truly *mean and try to do*—really and truly, mind—and so it is to *the efforts you have made, and the pains you have taken, to do your best*, that He will look when He comes to ‘mark’ your copy-book, and give you praise or blame for what you have written. When you remember this, therefore, you will see that it is not the great and clever writers whose copy-books are necessarily the best. The youngest and lowliest of you can do as much, in God’s sight, as they. You have often been given the advice which a wise man gave long, long ago: ‘Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.’<sup>2</sup> Well, the work, as I said a few minutes since, that we all ‘find to do’ is that of writing the Copy-Book of Life; and if we are true boys and girls, true men and women, we shall write it ‘with our might.’

I was speaking just now of the ‘top-lines’ of our copy-books, wasn’t I? And I said that they were the lines which we should always try to imitate. Well, I will tell you what I have seen

<sup>1</sup> ‘The Church Porch.’

<sup>1</sup> 1 Samuel xvi. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Ecclesiastes ix. 10.



boys doing sometimes. They have looked at the 'copy' carefully while they have written the first line or two of the page, and then, instead of keeping their eyes still on their model line, they have taken as their 'copy' their own last line. That is surely not the right thing to do, is it? That is not 'being true of their ideal.' No, *you must keep your eyes always on the 'top-line.'* You won't be able to make your own lines as perfect, I know. But remember that *the higher you aim, the higher you will get*: the nearer you try to get to the 'top line'—the 'ideal'—the better will your writing be—the sweeter, purer, and more beautiful will be your life.

These, then, are some of the lessons which I have been trying to teach you, and which I hope you have learnt, from the two pictures—the pictures of the two pages—we looked at together at the beginning of our chat: Life is like a copy-book which we have all to write, and in which each thought we think, each word we speak, each deed we do, is a letter, a word, or a line. Every morning, when we commence a new page, we must make up our minds to do better than before, and we must always keep our eyes and our thoughts on the 'top-line'—which is our model, or pattern, line. Try, then, dear children, to keep your copy-books clean. Always do your best. And then, when you come to close your copy-book—that is, when your life is ended, and your work here is finished—you may not have to look back upon pages

which make you grieve and give you bitter thoughts, but may hear the glad voice of the Great Schoolmaster, saying, as He 'marks' your copy-book, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'

H. KELSEY WHITE.

## Life's Journey.

'Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,  
Is our destined end or way;  
But to act, that each to-morrow  
Finds us *further* than to-day.'



JOSEPH MAZZINI, one of Italy's greatest patriots,—one who gave up position, wealth, and his whole life—for what he considered to be the best welfare of his beloved country,—naturally suffered much from 'the evils of the world' during his long and difficult career. Listen to what he says:—

'The life of man is a journey, the end of which is elsewhere. Pain and pleasure, happiness and unhappiness, are but the incidents of the journey.'

'The wind blows, the rain falls; the traveller fastens his cloak, sets his hat on firmly, and prepares for the struggle. At a later time the storm passes off, a day of sunshine breaks forth and warms his numbed limbs; the traveller smiles with pleasure, he thanks God in his heart.'

'But have the sun and the rain changed the end of the journey?'

## The Hebrew Scriptures.

### Some Difficulties in the way of understanding them.



T is not given to many of us who are Sunday School teachers to be able to make a study of the Hebrew language; and sometimes, when we are perplexed by the varieties of interpretation, we wonder how these differences come to be.

Having been brought face to face with these differences myself, and having had the key of a few of these mysteries put in my hands by friends who have studied Hebrew, I am emboldened to attempt to pass on the knowledge, thus acquired, to other teachers; in the hope that it may help them, as it has helped me, to understand better the meaning of difficult passages.

1. *Hebrew, being an early language, has fewer words to express the writer's meaning.* Take for instance, our three words ghost, spirit, breath; but in Hebrew one word does duty for all. A little reflection will enable us to find the underlying thought—the something unseen, which is a moving power; but it cannot always be easy to choose the word for the translation which will give the author's meaning.

The A.V. gives (*Gen. xxix. 17*) 'Leah was tender eyed;' the R.V. 'Leah's eyes were tender;' other translators give it as 'weak eyed.' *Tender*, of course may mean weak, but 'tender

eyed' gives us a very different impression from what was probably in the mind of the writer, who was comparing the two sisters; 'Leah's eyes were tender (weak), but Rachel was beautiful and well-favoured.'

Again in *Proverbs xxxi. 25* in the description of the 'Virtuous Woman,' the A.V. renders the verse 'she shall rejoice in time to come,' while the R.V., noting what has gone before—how by her industry the household has been clothed, etc., puts 'And she laugheth at the time to come'; that is to say, it is of no consequence to her what happens, for she knows that emergencies are provided for. One of the strangest illustrations of this confusion of meaning may be found in *Isaiah xviii. 2*, where the A.V. translates 'Go swift messengers, to a nation scattered and peeled' but the R.V. has it—'to a nation tall and smooth,' other translators give 'to a nation tall and smooth faced.' It is not a bad mental exercise to think over this sentence. Tall, drawn out, scattered,—these ideas may naturally be evolved one from the other; while a smooth faced man—a characteristic of Egyptians, as we see by the monuments—would quite naturally be likened to a stem with its bark peeled off. The same difficulty from one word having 'developed' meanings may be seen in the same verse, 'whose land the rivers have spoiled' (A.V.), 'the rivers divide.' (R.V.)

Although it is always a dangerous experiment to argue much from the small amount of knowledge we have,

it yet is well, when we come to a passage which seems wanting in sense, to try whether a somewhat different expression of the same *root thought*, would not make the sense clear. And in doing this we need not be hindered by the fact that the later translators have not made the change, for sometimes the very familiarity of the words interferes with the looking behind them to their actual meaning. To illustrate this let us turn to *Job* vii. 6. Both the A.V. and the R.V. give *Job's* words when he is lamenting his bodily pain and irritation as 'my days are *swifter* than a weaver's shuttle'; but after what has gone before this seems to me a break in the continuity of the thought; for days pass swiftly when we are happy. But will not *restless* translate the word equally well? if so, the passage is perfect in its sequence; one need but watch a shuttle in the loom to see the propriety of the adjective *restless*, as applied to it; and the root thought of swift movement, is the same.

Another illustration of familiarity with words tempting us to forget their meaning may be seen in *Exodus* xv. 11 where we have the same rendering in both A.V. and R.V.—when speaking of *Jahveh*. 'Fearful in praises,' instead of as it has been put elsewhere, 'Greatly to be feared and worthy to be praised.' It is obscurities such as these that lead people into the habit of reading the *words* of the Bible without attempting to go into the full meaning of them.

We must bear in mind, too, that the translator has an extremely difficult task; for he must ever be on his guard lest he import into the translation his *own* thoughts; and this fear would naturally, and rightly, make him very chary of altering the older translation more than he could help.

2 *The ancient Hebrew writing had no separation of words, and no vowels.* Imagine what would be our difficulty in making out long manuscripts comprised of such a string of letters as these—THSWSWRNG—though with vowels and separated words we read quite easily 'this was wrong.'

So in future when we see a note 'Text is obscure,' we shall perhaps enter a little more sympathetically into the difficulties of the translator. Later on, vowel points were added and this has of course made the language more easy to read.

JHVH. The sacred name of JhvH was only allowed to be said aloud on the rarest occasions, the more general word used being *Adonai*, The Lord. In writing JHVH the vowels a, o, a, of the word *Adonai* were sometimes taken and interspersed among the sacred letters, to indicate that the word *Adonai* was to be *read*; hence we get *Jehovah*; but students tell us that there is no reason for supposing that THE NAME was spoken in that way. J is pronounced as Y, and many scholars write the word as *Yahveh*; but it seems to me that it is better to keep to the four consonants which were used in early times, for it is quite easy to explain

that *j* has the sound of *y*, as in German and other languages.

In the A.V. and R.V. *Jahveh* is very often translated *The Lord*; in our selected readings (pp. 25-52) this has almost always been rendered according to the original, *Jahveh*, more especially when the ideas expressed in connection with *Jahveh*, though natural in the time of the childhood of the world, are not fitting to be applied to *The Lord*, as we think of Him to-day.

*Tenses.* The Hebrew verb has two tenses, according as the action is regarded as complete or incomplete (or, as we say, perfect or imperfect). But each of these may be past, present, or future; so they have to be interpreted according to the sense of the passage. Hence it is curious to note how various are the translations in this respect.

The above instances will show the advantages of comparing one translation with another when we want to get the real meaning of a passage which perplexes us, and in this the *Variorum Readings and Renderings* of the *Teacher's Bible* are most helpful. There is not space to give more than an illustration or two here; but the same kind of difficulty as is referred to above, occurs over and over again. In the book of *Job* the A.V. translation is sometimes curiously misleading; see, for example the passage in *Job* xxviii. 1-11, which in the R.V. is transformed into a grand description of a mine, showing how wonderfully man has planned and arranged it; and so leading to the further thought that, though he may

find the place of gold and of silver, the home of wisdom is known only to the Almighty.

Again in *Job* xxxi. 35, the A.V. has it 'my desire is that the Almighty would answer me, and that mine adversary had written a book.' As it stands there the passage is incomprehensible. *Job* is feeling that an enemy has maligned him to God, and that he is being punished for some sin of which he is not guilty, and we can quite understand his passionate cry to be heard, as given in the R.V., when he longs to 'see the indictment which mine adversary hath written.'

The only other point to which I will refer in this article is the curious mixing of first and third person in some of the psalms, in particular. (See *Psalms* civ.) It has to be remembered that this collection of sacred songs was made up of many older passages; and the custom was for these to be laid side by side without anything of the nature of what to-day we should call editing,—the welding into one whole. Canon Driver (Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament) points out that this is the case with the authors of the Hebrew historical books also, who—except the shortest, as *Ruth* and *Esther*—'do not, as a modern historian would do, *rewrite* the matter in their own language; they excerpt from the matters at their disposal such passages as are suitable for their purpose, and incorporate them in their work, sometimes adding matter of their own, but



often, as it seems, introducing only such modifications of form as are necessary for the purpose of fitting them together, or accommodating them to their plan. The Hebrew historiographer, as we know him, is essentially a compiler or arranger of pre-existing documents; he is not himself an original author.'

To anyone who will read *Gen.* vi.-ix. with care, it will be quite apparent how these older documents have been introduced, and placed side by side, the various passages often even contradicting one another.

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Do not keep the Alabaster boxes of your love and tenderness sealed up until your friends are dead. Fill their lives with sweetness. Speak approving, cheering words while their ears can hear them; the kind things you mean to say when they are gone, say *before* they go; the flowers you mean to send for their coffins send to brighten and sweeten their homes *before* they leave them.

If my friends have Alabaster boxes laid away, full of fragrant perfumes of sympathy and affection, which they intend to break over my dead body, I would rather they would bring them out in my weary and troubled hours, and open them that I may be refreshed and cheered while I need them. I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without an eulogy, than a life without the sweetness of love and sympathy.

Let us learn to anoint our friends beforehand for their burial. Postmortem kindness does not cheer the burdened spirit. Flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward over the weary way!

## Elizabeth, the Exile's Daughter.



TOWARDS the close of the last century the little country of Poland fell under the dominion of Russia. Among the valiant patriots who strove to regain their country's freedom, was Stanislaus Potowski, related to the royal house of Poland; but resistance was vain; the noble leader was seized, and, after spending a year in prison, he was banished to the deserts of Siberia. His wife insisted on accompanying her husband, and, taking their little four-year old daughter, Elizabeth, with them, they went on their weary way.

Arrived in Siberia, Stanislaus, now only known under the assumed name of Peter Springer, was allowed to hold no communication with anyone, except a Tartar peasant, who helped in the fir-tree cottage which the exile built for himself and little family. Shut out from all society, and passing year after year in that lonely, cold, desolate country, little Elizabeth spent the days of her childhood; and it was not even until she was about sixteen years old, that—to their great delight—she and her mother received permission to attend the Sunday services, held in a village some six miles away.

Peter Springer earned his living by shooting elk and ermines, and, more rarely, a bear. The money gained by the skins was enough to live upon;

but as years went by, the feeling of isolation seemed to become intensified; and Elizabeth, as she wandered over the barren tracts of country, was never weary of imagining plans by means of which she might bring relief to her parents.

Now it happened that, three years before the time of which I am now writing, the young son of Governor Smoloff of Tobolsk, had saved the life of Peter, when engaged in a bear chase; and his wife and daughter delighted to recall to memory Peter's description of the brave young fellow who had appeared so opportunely at the time of his extreme danger. Therefore when Elizabeth turned her thoughts to possible plans for freeing her father, she—who had no one to help her—grew into the habit of wishing that her father's brave deliverer might appear again and help her.

In the meantime she was not idle. She knew that the journey from Tobolsk to St. Petersburg was more than a thousand miles; she would have to walk the greater part of the distance; and walk very often, too, with a biting wind in her face. She determined, therefore, to prepare herself for this; and she accustomed herself to take long walks in all weathers and to harden herself in every way she could, in order that, when the opportunity came, she might be ready to embrace it.

One night her father did not return from his shooting at the usual time, and she and her mother grew alarmed. Both set out to search for him, and

presently, in the darkness, they heard an answering voice. It was not, however, the voice they expected; it was that of the Governor's son who had missed his way while hunting. He joined them in the search and before long Peter Springer was found, and the little party made their way back to the hut. Peter did not dare to ask his guest to go in; but the young man told him that he would be responsible to the Governor, his father; and so he entered and spent the night in their humble cottage.

This was the opportunity for which Elizabeth had waited so patiently; but it was long before her plans were definitely made. At first, young Smoloff declared the thing was impossible, but after he had seen how earnest was her purpose, and how she had prepared herself for the toilsome journey, he promised his help.

Again, however, she had to wait; for her friend was called away to military service in Russia. But before leaving he had confided everything to his father, who, struck with admiration at the brave girl's design, promised to do what he could for her.

A careful list of all the places that she would have to pass on her way was made, and an old missionary, who was about to journey to Russia, was sent to the cottage by the Governor. This, of course, meant that Elizabeth might take the opportunity of going with the good man.

The moment had arrived for Elizabeth to tell her plans, plans which her

father had begun already to suspect. At first her parents refused to let her go—how could they bear to think of her taking such a terrible journey? but at length her quiet earnestness, her pleading eyes, did their work, and the permission was reluctantly given.

It was in the month of May, 1800, that Elizabeth set out with the good old Father Paul; and though they went on steadily day by day, it was not until September that they reached the middle of their journey, more than five hundred miles from their starting point. Up to this time everything had gone on fairly well, but now Father Paul's strength began to give way, and at last he became too weak to go further. In the village they found a simple lodging, and there Elizabeth tenderly nursed her friend. But all her care was powerless to restore the old man's health, and, after a few kind words of counsel as to how she was to proceed, her faithful companion died.

The illness and the funeral had taken nearly all the money that had been given by the Governor Smoloff to Father Paul for the journey; and when she left the village to go on her way alone, Elizabeth had but eight shillings left. But the brave girl's courage did not flag; her noble mission being the one thing on which she allowed her thoughts to dwell; and another month found her still steadily advancing.

And now she came to a stream across which she would have to be

ferried; but the waters were so swollen with the late rains that at first the man refused to take her across. Elizabeth told her simple story, however, and Nicholas, the ferryman, was so touched by it that he took her to the other side in his boat, refusing all payment, and indeed, pressing upon her a small coin. This kindness cheered the poor girl greatly and she trudged along again with renewed courage. But it was lonely work, and she had to be content with little food and the roughest shelter. Sometimes a kind peasant would give her a bowl of bread and milk, but the inhabitants were often too poor themselves to be able to spare much for the weary traveller.

Many a strange encounter did she have on her lonely journey; once as she was crossing the moors she lost the path and knew not which way to turn. Presently she heard voices and was comforted; but when the men appeared to whom the voices belonged she was frightened; for they were highway robbers. She told them who she was; that she had walked all the way from Siberia and was going on to Moscow to ask for pardon for her father. The men looked on her in amazement, and when, on further questioning, they heard what difficulties she had overcome, they turned away and went off in fear, thinking her some supernatural being.

Fortunately she soon regained the right path, and before long found her way into a nunnery, where she was given shelter for the night. The

good nuns were too poor to help her much; but each gave her one of her own garments, so that Elizabeth was once more properly clothed, her own dress being now completely worn out.

Very soon Elizabeth came in sight of Moscow, the big city; and as she entered it, crowds of people met her at every turn. She asked what was going on. 'Do you not know?' was the answer, 'to-morrow is March 1st, and then our young Emperor Alexander is to be crowned here.'

This was delightful news indeed to Elizabeth, for it meant that the end of her journey had come; the Emperor being in Moscow, she would not have to go on to St. Petersburg.

Only one night before the great day! but where was she to lodge? who would give her food? for she had come to the end of all her money. Everyone seemed too busy to notice the poor girl, and at last she was about to be roughly sent away when a kind-hearted man, who had listened to her story and believed it, offered to take her to his wife. Here she was kindly received, and the next day she made her way to the cathedral.

Standing amid the crowd she heard the impressive coronation service. Then the bishop stood forth, and spoke to the Emperor of his mighty position, bidding him never to forget the quality of Mercy. These words seemed so in keeping with the purpose of the exile's brave daughter, that she was quite overcome and, forgetting all else, she rushed forward and threw herself at the

feet of the Emperor, crying 'Mercy, mercy!'

The next moment the soldiers, standing near, had dragged her away; but the Emperor interposed, and sent for her again. A young officer gladly obeyed His Majesty's command, for he thought he recognised the voice; and when Elizabeth looked up, on hearing the summons, she found herself face to face with Smoloff, the Governor's son. He accompanied her to the Emperor, who, on hearing the whole story, immediately granted the noble girl's prayer; and sent her, with a grand escort, back to her parents so that she might have the joy of returning with them. The estates of the patriot were restored to him, and he and his wife lived many years to bless this wonderful act of devotion on the part of their beloved daughter.

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'TROUBLES come to all of us; they are stern facts; they are here and must be borne; but it makes all the difference in the world how we bear them. We can clench our fists, close our lips tightly, and say, "Since I must, I can"; or we can look up and say cheerfully, "I will." The first method is philosophical and strong enough, but there is no sweetness in it. If you have this burden to carry, make it as light, not heavy, as you can; if you have this grief to endure, you want at least to come out of it sweeter and stronger than ever before. It seems a pity to let it go for nothing.'

*Polly Oliver's Problem.* MRS. WIGGIN.



## The Art of Helping our Young Human Life.

**T**HE art of helping this young human life which gathers about us, either in our homes or in our Sunday schools, to do and to be its best in the world it has entered once for all, is the one thing we teachers most need to know and to use.

By art I do not mean artifice. With artificial methods I have not much sympathy. Indeed, I sometimes fear that the natural unfolding of a higher life in our children is seriously hindered by many of our plans and devices. But, surely, our Sunday school work *is* an art in the highest sense—albeit an art that most of us know very little about. And my paper will serve its purpose if it shows that this art, where not possessed, can be acquired; that it rests upon the knowledge of some half-dozen laws of human nature; that it consists in the application of a few ordinary powers of the human spirit. As a matter of fact we all use this art every time we attempt to teach, but it is often like Emerson and his son with the calf. Says Emerson in his *Journal*: ‘I like people who can do things. When Edward and I struggled in vain to drag our big calf into the barn the Irish girl put her finger in the calf’s mouth and led it in directly.’<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ‘*Emerson in Concord.*’

Assuming that in all our work with young people we want, in the most natural way, to help the better life that is within them, the first thing for every Sunday school teacher to know—and never, never forget, is—that the young life he has to deal with is gradually unfolding; according to its *own nature*. Religion it needs all the time, but Religion in such different phases as to seem almost a different Religion. The changes are astonishing from the inner life of a child to the inner life of a youth or maiden, and then to the inner life of a man or woman.

Now what are these inner changes of growing life from childhood, youth, and maturity? The changes are not distinctly marked, but they fall into, at least, three periods, which I will name in this way: (1) The period of wonder; (2) The period of moral awakening; (3) The period of mental difficulty.

Any practical teacher here will see at once the great use of knowing these facts. For, if you would be a helper of young human life you must, at least, know *what sort of help* it needs; and the *sort of help* it needs depends entirely upon the period it is passing through.

Take, for example, the period of mental difficulty. Yes, there is a time of serious reflection and real doubt at which some of the scholars in our schools arrive. But when is it? In what classes? Not in the infant class, certainly. No, nor in any other of the classes whose scholars range in

age from five to fifteen. All these have no great *mental* difficulties. They suffer not the 'malady of thought.' Their critical and reflective faculties—which are the very latest to arise—have not yet arisen. And yet do we really in our teachings and text-books,—concerning Scripture and Doctrine—provided for these classes, avoid, as we should, dealing in problems critical and metaphysical, in which a boy or a girl has, and ought to have, no interest, and for which indeed they have as yet no faculties. A wise teacher, however definite his doctrinal and scriptural teaching, will never 'disease' mere boys and girls with 'theological *problems*' which are only 'the soul's mumps, and measles, and whooping-coughs,'<sup>1</sup> never caught by healthy-minded children, however they may afflict the intellects of men.

No, it is only by those scholars in the adult classes—and not always there—that the period of mental difficulty is naturally arrived at. It is in this period that a teacher of young men, for instance, needs to know and to use all the art he can acquire of helping them in their intellectual unrest.

If they know him to be a *good* man his word of faith will have power to help them fight their doubts, and gather strength, to fight these 'spectres of the mind.' They really want to *believe*; but mere cleverness, mere conquering them in debate, does not convince. Only a soul of natural sympathy, making no pretence to omniscience, able to doubt

their doubts, acknowledging that if we have to wait for everything to be cleared we may have to die before we begin to live, yet having faith in a few things by which *he* is, evidently, *trying* to live—ah, it is this which, when the period of doubt ever comes, helps a young life wonderfully.

So, to take another example including the infant and earlier classes in a Sunday school.<sup>1</sup> What natural period are these children in? I say *natural* because there are no facts in nature more clear and universal than these: a child is like a little Undine. It has no soul that it is aware of; a baby is incapable of sin. To talk to children about either soul or sin is, therefore, unnatural. All the first faculties of a child are found 'pushing themselves outward.' They are the springs of Wonder, Admiration, and Reverence. These are the faculties, divinely-given, that open first of all those which we have to help in our Sunday schools. Are our class-books for these children designed to direct their Wonder, uplift their Admiration, exact their Reverence? Yet this is evidently the help God intends us first to give to a young human life. And while these divine springs of Wonder, Admiration, and Reverence are free and fresh in children, is it not just the period for a teacher to help them, not so much to a knowledge of, as to a faith in, God and Goodness? 'It is in childhood,' says Jean Paul, 'that the

<sup>1</sup> Emerson.

<sup>1</sup> See Martineau's 'The Child's Thought' in the '*Endeavour*.'

divine is born of the human.' How careful then should the teacher be in what he *is* and what he *says*, in the hymns he teaches them, in the prayers he prays with them—how careful that the children's conception of the Divine is natural *to them*. For a child's reverences and admirations are the very breath of its religious life. Hence the significance of that trustful, impulsive, young girl's exclamation, when, growing a little older, a dash of half-doubt about it once made her say: 'Mother, if you were not *not*—GOOD, I believe I should feel terribly enraged!'

But, now, I have said nothing yet about that young human life which lies between the infant classes and the adult. Nowhere in our Sunday schools is the art of helping more needed than here, because it is somewhere between the infant period and adult that the period of moral awakening comes. In other words a scholar arrives at that self-conscious stage when many forces of his nature seem more than he can manage. He must either yield to these natural forces or the forces must yield to him. He begins to have a hidden life known only to himself. Perhaps by this time he has discovered that the characters of other persons he once admired or even revered are so faulty. And all this may lead him to disrespect the life-rules which older folk call Moral Laws, and to suspect that right and wrong are as you please, if you can. This is perhaps the most serious period of all. I have sometimes wondered why we have not more

class-books, such as Mr. John Dendy with considerable success has attempted for young men,<sup>1</sup> to help a young human life at this inevitable juncture in its career. What art, then, can teachers use in dealing with their scholars all the way up and through this period?

In dealing with this young life we are thinking of, a teacher should aim first of all to call forth in each of his scholars *Self-respect*. Perhaps *Self-respect* is the root of all virtues. At any rate you cannot morally influence a boy for good who has no self-respect. But if you can elicit his self-respect even a lad of ten can understand that many things he might do are beneath him—unworthy of himself.<sup>2</sup> That dogs may be quarrelsome, and cats cruel, and foxes foxy, and hares timid, and snakes sly, and rats thievish, and pigs dirty, without moral blame he can see plainly. But were he—a boy—to act like these animals he would forfeit self-respect. 'A small vagabond,' says Froude, 'one day when I was out for a walk with Carlyle, was at some indecency. Carlyle touched the imp gently on the back with his stick, and said, "Do you not know that you are a little man, and not a whelp, that you behave in this way?"'

And now I can go on to say that if you would awaken self-respect in your scholar you must yourself respect him. I use the word *respect* advisedly, and rather than any other. Yes, you can actually respect a lad into *self-respect*.

<sup>1</sup> *Successful Life*, S. S. Association.

<sup>2</sup> A paper on 'Honour' in *Christian Register*.

You can do more. Said a hardened convict once (in whom as it seems there was still one soft place), awaking from utter self-despair, after a true gentleman, who was giving him at least a chance, had simply consulted with him about it in a human fashion, 'He knows what I am, and yet he spoke to me as if I was somebody.' That's it. He was—and now felt he was—a somebody. So is each young human life. A somebody, separate and different from anyone else in God's universe, a distinct personality whom the Divine Power has 'loved into being,' on which ground alone it is entitled at least to our respect.

Nor need you ever *say* it, to make a lad feel that you respect him. Some things are more eloquent unsaid. To say them spoils them. 'Ma'am Bernis, who worked for Madame Hoar, drying her hands and rolling down her sleeves, was asked if she was going so soon? 'Yes, I've got to go now. I'm going to Mr. Emerson's lecture.'

'Do you understand Mr. Emerson?'

'Not a word; but I like to go and see him stand up there and look as if he thought everyone was as good as he was.'<sup>1</sup>

'He is a bad boy, is he?' says one of the wisest<sup>2</sup> friends of children in this century. 'He is a bad boy, is he? Then I must find some way of getting acquainted with him.' Indeed, in order to help any boy or girl: 'I must first get him to *like* me, before

I can have any influence over him. And, to make him like me, I must make him think I am his friend; and to make him think I am his friend, I must really *be* his friend. I must feel kindly toward him, and must help him in some way or other, or do him some good,—and that, too, with his own ideas of good.'

But self-respect, and the respect of others, do not exhaust the help that a young human life will need. The highest help we can ever give it is toward a Higher Helper than ourselves. The need for this final Help a young life cannot be conscious of at first; sometimes, perchance, in this world it may never reach that 'awful verge of manhood' which we name 'God-consciousness.'

And yet I have a vision—which is not all a dream—first, of this young human life as one of those at play there in the valley, and then as one who with others unconsciously climbs the upward slope of Time, learning much meanwhile, and rejoicing most of all in the fellowship of a few approving companions at his side; until, some day, some evening it may be, he suddenly finds that he is a separate soul! The mystery of Personality penetrates him. Consciousness of the tremendous truth has come to him that he *is* a life, and holds a trust whose responsibility none but he can take. And if your young life, when it first consciously touches this lonely summit of Personality, is also conscious, then and there, that God is

<sup>1</sup> Emerson in Concord.

<sup>2</sup> The late Jacob Abbott (U.S.).



over it and in it all as are the sky and air, that the Moral Laws encircle him clear and certain as the stars,—then has a life been helped indeed.

But do not misunderstand me. I am not meaning to say that our art of helping should end in making a young life look inward. My point here is that at this period of moral awakening the mind is sure to look inward, and as Martineau puts it 'only a sight of God within' can save it. Still we must always understand that 'character grows not of self-inspection but of self-sacrifice,—action for the good of others.'

And so, rooted in self-respect, enjoying the respect of others, steadied by a sense of the Highest, this young human life will need helping by the art of the teacher,<sup>1</sup> 'on weekdays of work as well as on Sundays of speculation.' 'Our God is a very practical God'<sup>2</sup> in his training of us, and we must be very practical men in our training of the young. For instance: Temper is two-fifths of character. Keeping a promise; owning a fault; consideration for others; an outlook for good and not evil;—are not these some of the practicable things to help a young life to? And, besides these, there is another thing which I set out by itself: Simple Truthfulness. Very few people appear to realize how difficult it is for many young natures to tell the truth. They have actually to learn to tell the truth, and

a whole life-time may pass before they learn, unless they are helped in their earlier days.

Have we not, then, in these things a field of work wherein the teacher's highest art will find full employment. And this is just what I want to say of it: The teacher who would practically help his scholars must live with them, occasionally at any rate, under other circumstances than those of the pleasant Sunday hour. I look upon every week-night meeting at school as, in fact, the practice-time of what we mostly talk about on Sunday, especially where a teacher has his class to himself, as in his own home, or in 'getting up a piece,' or children's nights, in recreation rooms.

So, in a ramble, on the lawn tennis ground or cricket field, in game or dance at school, those two-fifths, and indeed the whole five-fifths of young character, often get practically tested; and by the gentle, natural help of a teacher, get truly, although it be ever so little, trained. And, I think more and more, that this field of moral exercise in our schools might well be extended. Christ's Religion, we say, means to do something for others. 'To take trouble to do good to others,' is not a bad definition of it. But how seldom we think of getting our scholars to do anything for others than themselves? How little we call upon them to give, or to give up? Are we not wronging their natures by never appealing to that divinest spirit which ever moved mankind—

<sup>1</sup> T. H. Green.

<sup>2</sup> The Curé in Cable's *Bonaventure*.

The spirit of self-sacrifice which, be you sure, is in them and in all of us, else would its highest manifestation in Jesus thrill no heart.

Fellow-teachers! an instinctive sympathy with young human life has led me to watch it and work with it humbly these many years past. An instinct, which has no merit, may yet perhaps plead with you to pardon any apparent tone didactic in this paper. It is not as though I felt I had already attained, and could, therefore, tell others the certain way. Nor have I the least opposition to any method any teacher can vitally use. But this I see and say, that though in our Sunday schools there may be divers operations there should be but one spirit and aim—higher life or character. And of this I am sure: it is always a higher soul that must lift a lower. In short: Personality is the beginning and end of all our work.

J. J. WRIGHT.

‘It takes the ideal to blow an inch inside  
The dust of the actual: and your Fourriers  
failed,

Because not poets enough to understand  
That life develops from within.’

*Aurora Leigh.*—E. B. BROWNING.

‘Ah, but a man’s reach should exceed his  
grasp.’

ROBERT BROWNING.

‘An oar dipped in the water appears  
crooked or broken to the beholder. But  
the rower who guides it feels it to be strong  
and straight. So the designs of Providence  
seem to us sometimes bent or broken, but in  
His hands they are straightforth and strong.’

*Diary.*—H. W. LONGFELLOW.



## The Editor's Bookshelf.

**Q**UR Sunday School Association's tabulated list of books is lying before me, with so many interesting and helpful books named therein, that I shall ask for it to be inserted at the end of this volume, in order that parents and teachers may have it for ready reference.

During the next year we are promised three new books by the Association, and to these we look forward with great interest. They are:—

THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE. *Vol. 1. Old Testament.* By Rev. J. H. Weatherall. Herein will be given information concerning the probable date of the various books, and the circumstances under which they were written, etc.

HYMNS AND THEIR WRITERS: *By Rev. V. D. Davis*, whose studies in this department of literature will make such a book from his hands most acceptable. It will deal with some of

our best hymns and tell something of the lives of their writers.

MORALS AND THEIR RELATION TO RELIGION. *By Rev. C. B. Upton.* This will be of great service in our senior classes, where the problems of life are beginning to press upon the attention of young people.

Our Liverpool friends have issued an excellent pamphlet, *A LIST OF BOOKS FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS*,<sup>1</sup> *to be used in the preparation of their lessons*, which should be consulted in all our schools.

In addition to the various subjects, under which the suggested text books are placed, there is a special part devoted to the teaching of Unitarian Christianity, which, together with an introductory paper, has been contributed by Dr. Beaumont Klein. The following is one of the extracts which heads this section:—

‘Unitarianism is not a body of opinion, it is a habit of mind and a principle of conduct. There is no such thing as a Unitarian sect. We speak accurately only when we speak of a Unitarian Movement. It is the movement away from dogmatic Christianity towards spiritual Christianity.’  
—(SAMUEL E. ELIOT.)

Here are a few true words from Dr. Klein's introduction, referring to the method of teaching:—

‘Nothing is learnt but by *personal* mental effort, and mere listening is usually insufficient on the part of the scholars.

<sup>1</sup> May be had of the Liverpool Booksellers' Co., 70, Lord Street, Liverpool; or from the Sunday School Association, Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand. Price 6d.

‘They must be made to use their own minds in endeavouring to master what has been taught.

‘The first step towards their being able to think for themselves is to get accustomed to think at all.

‘Many in after-life cherish the belief that they are thinking for themselves, but in reality they are only dealing vaguely and illogically with thoughts, picked up here and there at random; because they have never learnt to think, in the proper sense of the word.

‘A lesson which has only exercised the mental powers of the teacher is, however able and valuable in itself, a dead failure. But the scholars themselves, by being made to work, can turn it into a complete success.’

Now and again we receive, from friends across the Atlantic, some excellent specimens of the books and papers that have been brought out there. *LARGE TRUTHS IN LITTLE STORIES* is the title of a series of lesson notes (by Kate Gannett Wells), taking up somewhat similar ground to A. L. C. in ‘Do the Right,’ but printed on separate illustrated cards, instead of in book form. This method of using cards is a very favourite one in many classes, I know. The Rev. E. A. Horton, of Boston, has brought out an excellent series, called *BEACON LIGHTS*, in this way, wherein he tells something of many a steadfast, noble life.

We are constantly wanting illustrative stories for our teaching, and here, on my shelves, I have three books to which I should like to introduce our readers.

THE REAL PRINCESS, and Other

*Stories*,<sup>1</sup> is an excellent collection of real Parable stories, told in a charming manner. The lost princess, whose true lineage is only discoverable by the nobility of her conduct; the wonderful country where people's dispositions are distinguished by the various colours of their garments; the curious painter who covered an old woman's house with pictures of her life; these, and others, are excellent for the purpose of impressing many a lesson, and are great favourites with children.

Then, under the title of *NATURE'S STORY (Science talks to young thinkers)*,<sup>1</sup> by *H. Farquhar*, we have, simply written and clearly expressed, some interesting chapters on Plant and Animal Life, on the Beginnings of Things, Cloudland, etc. Those who wish to lead their children upward and onward by the glorious path of Nature's beauty, will find here knowledge and reverence hand in hand, as they always should be.

Curiously enough, the third book which I want to mention has its title almost identical with the last one, being *NATURE STORIES*, by *Florence Bass* (2s. 6d.). The subject is also on similar lines, but it is prepared for younger children, and is printed in large type with many little pictures dotted about. In order to show the simplicity of style and beauty of the underlying thought I will conclude by giving, as illustration, what Miss Bass tells us of

<sup>1</sup> These books may be had from Mr. Hare, Sunday School Association, Essex Hall, Essex Street, Strand, W.C.

## THE DODDER.

### I.

One day a little seed fell to the ground.

Soon a tiny plant grew up.

Its little roots went down into the ground.

They took up food for the young plant.

Little Dodder soon saw a big plant near it.

It seemed to say: 'What a big fine plant that is! How much sap it must have in its stem! It would not miss the little it would take to feed me. It is hard work to get food from the ground for myself. I will go over to the big plant and get food all ready to use.'

So little Dodder crept over to the big plant.

It fastened itself to the stem. It sucked the sap out of the stem of the big plant.

Then it lived easily. It did not have the trouble of getting food from the ground.

### II.

Do you think young Dodder had done a good thing?

Let us see. Nature seemed to say: 'Ah! you lazy little plant! You will not use the root I gave you, so you shall not keep it.'

Soon the root dried up and fell away. 'You will not use leaves, so you shall have none.'

Then young Dodder had no way to



get food, except by taking sap from the plant upon which it lived.

Alas! that it began to live in the wrong way!

It grew bigger every day, but still lived upon another's work.

By and by it raised its little flowers and seeds.

It fed from the sap of the big plant.

It seems to be punished for its bad ways.

It has no beauty to show us—nothing better than its bare, tangled yellow stems.


If it had only used its root it would not have lost it.

People often lose what they will not use.

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## The Sunday School Red Book.

FOR SUPERINTENDENTS.

 HIS small pocket book, issued by the S. S. Union, and written by its Chairman of Council, Mr. Belsey, contains a great many useful hints for the conduct of Sunday schools, and our Superintendents would do well to read it; for though the concluding chapters, more especially, bear special reference to the S. S. Union's various societies, the spirit of the book must commend itself to all practical workers.

The short chapters deal, in turn, with the superintendent's relation to the minister, to the teachers, to the scholars; followed by suggestions with

regard to school organization, lessons, singing, order, libraries, etc., etc.

Speaking of the superintendent's position towards THE TEACHERS, the author says:—

Remember your election to your office has made you '**first among equals**,' and it will be your duty, as the elected president of the school, to express the common voice, as the law by which all shall abide.

Cultivate the confidence and friendship of each teacher; keep in friendly and sympathetic touch with all.

Watch for any teachers who may happen to be having a dispiriting time with their classes, and be sure, before they leave the school, to say an **appreciative, sympathetic word** or two, after the children have left.

As to THE SCHOLARS.

**Know them personally**, their Christian and surnames. A good shepherd can identify each individual sheep.

**Have no favourites**; and if some sweet little sunny faces will get nearest to your heart, don't let them, or anyone else, observe it by any partiality shown them. Rather let your kindest words and acts be bestowed on any poor, shabby, neglected child no one seems to care for.

Remember most Sunday school 'bad boys' are only suffering from excessive life and animal spirits.

Have, where possible, a private room or some corner screened from observation, where you can personally talk with any boy sent out as incorrigible. Let his temper cool before you begin your talk. Always speak to one only at a time, never to two or three bad boys together. Clear away, if possible, and where necessary, any sense of injustice. Show him you want to believe the very best about him. Commence your reproof with a few words of praise and appreciation of some good point in his character or conduct.

# Teachers in Council

## Sunday School Visiting.

**T**HE question of Sunday school visiting is one that has often been discussed among individual teachers. Some object to it altogether; they feel they are being meddled with and resent the intrusion.

I confess that visits of *inspection* merely do not commend themselves altogether to my mind; I feel that, in the first place, there are not many teachers who have the necessary experience to justify their occupying such a position.

At the same time it is, doubtless, of extreme value that we should know the different methods carried out in the various schools, both because it will enable us to improve our own, and also we may be able to give a suggestion that may help others.

Another important point is that when visiting is carried out by the united body of schools in one district, it gives an outward and visible sign of that union, and brings home to teachers and scholars alike that they belong to a larger band; thus giving them that encouragement and strength which imperceptibly comes when we feel that

we are not isolated from others, but united to larger forces than ourselves.

These were the underlying principles which guided the London Sunday School Society when they altered their method of visiting some years ago; and the practical carrying of it out is described in the following contribution to the Teachers' Council.

### METHOD OF THE LONDON SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

An annual visit is paid to each school affiliated to the London Sunday School Society. The visit is a friendly one and paid in the same month, or as nearly as possible so, in each year. The S. School delegates and the elected members of the Committee of the above society pay the visits according to the following scheme.

The Committee meets monthly during eleven months of the year. There are twenty-five, sometimes twenty-six schools, on the visiting list.

At the Committee meeting following the annual meeting one of the delegates is entrusted with the entire management of the visiting branch of the society's work; and he prepares a table showing what schools come in each

month into the rota for a visit. Promises are then obtained from members of the Committee to visit individual schools in the months named.

The London Sunday School Society's form (tabulating all the numerical details, constitution, and teaching of the school) is then forwarded to the delegates of those schools appointed to be visited. This form they are required to fill up and send back, telling the most suitable day, from their school's point of view, for the visit to the visitor.

A week or ten days later a printed reminder is sent to the visitor, to which is attached a form with blank spaces opposite each of the following points: 'Punctuality and attendance of teachers and scholars, the discipline observed in assembly, dismissal, class order, and school order. The character of singing, prayer, and class-lessons. The method adopted in giving such lessons, whether oral, semi-oral, or pure "reading round." Finally, any points in the school which strike the visitor as noticeably good or bad.' This form is sent simply as a suggestion to the visitor, to be used or not, as he or she thinks best. It is often found to be a convenient help during the visit, the blanks opposite each point noted for remark enabling the visitor to record rather more fully than is usually the case in a hurried hour, his or her impressions on each detail of the school work.

The delegates of the school visited during the month are asked either to attend the next Committee meeting themselves or to arrange for some teacher

from the school to attend, so as to hear the report read and answer any questions or make any necessary explanations. These reports are then carefully preserved, and at the end of the year they are analysed, and a digest made, which is the basis upon which the report on school visiting is formed.

The scheme is the outcome of an endeavour to draw the workers in the individual schools together, to find out and spread the best methods of school management and school teaching, and to provoke by friendly criticism a desire in each school not only, not to be found in any way wanting, but to initiate some improvement which may be discovered by the visitor and used to benefit other schools all over London.

A. H. BIGGS.

## II.

Before describing the method of Sunday school visiting adopted by the Midland Sunday School Association, I should like to say a word or two (at the Editor's kindly suggestion) on the question of such visits generally, and on the plan followed by the London Sunday School Society in particular.

I entirely agree with the writer of the previous article that the visits should be of *friendly visitation*, not in any sense of *inspection*.

To stamp them unmistakably with this friendly character, the teachers should know a week or fortnight prior to the visit when the visitor may be expected, so that he may see the school

at its best and be thus enabled to carry away a deep impression of its good points for recommendation elsewhere. He should, of course, criticise as well as commend, but it is essential to his role of friendly adviser, that his adverse comments should be made only to the teachers of the school concerned, and not be published to the world. The first of these important conditions seems to be fully observed by the London Sunday School Society, but everything depends on the way the Committee meet the delegate of the school whose report is being considered, whether the second is as entirely kept in view or otherwise. I am inclined to think if the Secretary of the Society (or some other person appointed) met the teachers in committee and discussed the report with *them*, the second condition I have laid down would be better observed. In other respects the method of visiting Mr. Biggs describes is an admirable one, and I have carefully noted one or two details of it to bring before my own Association.

#### METHOD OF THE MIDLAND SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

At the annual meeting each year, visitors—of late four in number—are appointed for the ensuing twelve months. These visit the schools at any time convenient to the visitor, without notifying the fact of their coming to the schools. As to reports, our method varies. Either a *résumé* of salient good and bad points noticed is drawn up by the visitors jointly, or a

report on each visit is sent to the teachers for their consideration and *emendation*, previous to printing and despatching to all the schools in the Association. Personally, I am not greatly in favour of the latter course, as it tends to set up invidious distinctions, and, nowhere is the injustice and odium of comparison more out of place than in this, the grand old institution of the Sunday School.

In recent years the question of discontinuing to print the reports has been more than once mooted, but the Committee has felt that the visits were a strong bond of union between school and school, and that the printed reports, as evidence of that connecting link, could not be dispensed with.

FRANK TAYLOR.

#### III.

The Committee of the Manchester District Sunday School Association attaches great importance to Sunday School visiting, and, when possible, arranges for each affiliated school to be visited annually; but with seventy-five schools on the list, this is not now practicable—especially so, as many schools are not at their best during the summer months, and consequently do not care to receive a visitor then—so each year a few schools are left over.

The visitors are chosen from persons having a long practical experience in Sunday School work; some of them have the faculty of detecting the weak points in the organization, and of suggesting just the right



thing to effect an improvement, also of noting any good feature which may suit the requirements of some other school.

#### METHOD OF THE MANCHESTER DISTRICT SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

Soon after the annual meeting on Good Friday the Committee meets to appoint visitors, to decide which schools are to be visited, and draw up the visitors' plan. Each visitor then offers 'a visit of *help* and *encouragement*' to every school on his list, the date being mutually arranged. He is supplied with a very elaborate series of 'hints,' so that nothing is likely to escape his attention.

At the close of the day's proceedings the visitor usually meets the teachers in conference, when he gives his impressions of his visit; commending the good points, frankly but in a friendly spirit criticising the shortcomings, suggesting improvements in method and increased means of usefulness; and calling attention to the various auxiliary institutions by which the Association seeks to help on the work of the Sunday School. As a rule discussion follows, and in many instances much good has resulted from such a conference.

It is then the duty of the visitor to make a written report to the Committee (as *brief* and *pithy* as possible), and send a copy of it to the Secretary of the school visited, by him to be brought before the teachers; so that

every opportunity is given for the school to profit by the visit.

Generally the same person visits a school at least two years in succession, so that any improvement or otherwise may be noted and pointed out.

A digest of the visitors' reports is printed in the annual report of the Association. In this digest (which bears somewhat the character of a composite photograph) individual schools are not named, except to commend some especially good feature.

The size of the schools in the Association varies from an average attendance of 13 to one of 532.

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In my opinion Sunday School Visiting is helpful, because:—

1. It acts as an incentive to teachers, who have a laudable desire that their school should *deserve* a good report, and who are, therefore, anxious to secure and maintain an improvement where needed.

2. A stranger is more apt to notice disorder or want of discipline, which may have grown up so gradually (or which the officers may have got so accustomed to) as not to be noticed by those regularly at the school.

3. In the case of small schools the visitor is the only 'outward and visible sign' of union with the Association, and he can often be of service in helping superintendents and teachers out of their difficulties, by means of advice founded on experience gained in other schools.

4. The visitor can often give very

welcome information with respect to suitable school books. During some part of his visit he manages to spend a few minutes at the book cupboard, and eager search is made for any fresh book that has been found of service. This department is capable of extension. It is worth consideration whether the visitor could not act as a kind of commercial traveller for the Sunday School Association, by having specimen copies of their publications with him at the school visited. Actual contact with a book is better than any verbal description. If something of this kind could be done it would be a good thing for the Sunday School Association: it would be a better thing for the school.

The visits are looked forward to with pleasure by most schools. True, here and there an odd school has declined to receive a visit; true, also, there have been one or two schools where a teacher has shown an objection to being 'inspected,' altogether misunderstanding the purpose and aim of the visit.

Could something in the nature of inter-association visits be arranged occasionally, typical schools in one association's district being visited by a member of another association? It might be advantageous.

F. CRAWSHAW.

'Go with the sun and the stars, and yet  
evermore in thy spirit,  
Say to thyself: It is good, and yet there is  
better than it.'

A. H. CLOUGH.

## A Word to Young People.

WHY CALL OURSELVES CHRISTIANS?



AMONG the companionships which our young people form with friends of other churches, they are not unfrequently questioned as to their religious belief. Sometimes they may find themselves at a loss to give a ready, and a simple reply; and, therefore, in view of such a possibility, it may prove of service to place before them a few plain and earnest thoughts on the subject of Religion,—on its purpose in making our lives better, and happier,—and on such views of Christian doctrine, as we believe to be reasonable, and in accord with the utterances, and with the spirit of Jesus, the one Master of all Christians alike.

And here it should be emphatically declared that we are Christians no less than our friends who worship in other churches than our own.

We desire to be faithful followers of Jesus, and therefore we would be the first to say that the closer we keep to his words and to his beautiful example, the more likely are we to find our position a true, and a comforting one.

It is well to give prominence to such a statement, for there are still to be found those outside our own household of faith who doubt our loyalty to Jesus, and who deny our right to call ourselves Christians at all.

In the first place, then, the purpose of Religion is to lead us to a sincere belief in God, to help us to realise

thankfully and reverently, that all the glories of the universe, all the beauty of human life, all the sweetness of unselfish affection, are not mere results of a happy chance, but are due to that great and good Being, whose intelligence designed them, whose mighty power created them, and whose everlasting love sustains them.

And not only as our *Creator*, do we believe in Him. He is the sovereign of our life, He is the judge of our actions; and, since He has, as the Scriptures deliver to us, given to man understanding by the inspiration of his spirit, He enables us, by the influence of that spirit, which is heard more or less in every human heart, and which we call conscience, to recognise, and to estimate the solemn, and the everlasting difference between right and wrong.

And this knowledge He has mercifully given to all men, more or less,—to the Christian, to the Jew, and to the heathen also.

As to *that* truth, the pages of the Old Testament and of New alike convince us.

The Old Testament tells us that He accepted the repentance of the *Jews*, when *they* turned from the error of their ways; and it declares as clearly that He had great pity, too, on a multitude of *heathens*, like the men of Nineveh, when *they* sincerely repented, and turned to better life.

And in the New Testament, Jesus says plainly that many shall come from all the quarters of the world, and shall

sit down in the kingdom of God, at last. The Apostle Paul too, declares his conviction of the glorious truth that all men are alike 'the offspring of God,' and that even the Gentiles—the very Pagans—do by nature,—that is, by the natural perceptions God has lovingly given to them, the very things, which the Jews, and the Christians believed to make up 'the law' of God.

Now this is a very simple, and a thoroughly scriptural statement of doctrine. It embodies our view: it expresses the broad, and brotherly, and generous faith that our forefathers gathered from the Bible, and handed on to us.

If, however, we had only the Old Testament remaining for our instruction we should believe as much as has been already set forth: but, born as we are of Christian descent, and amid Christian influences, it must necessarily come about, that having been taught to regard Jesus as our 'Master' and our 'Lord,' we cannot help listening to what he is declared to have told us about God. So, we think of God, we try to listen to His voice that we can hear in our hearts, and we breathe our prayers to Him the more willingly, because we are, thereby, proving ourselves Christ's disciples in a very sure way, in so far as we imitate his example and cherish his teachings about that same merciful God who, so Jesus declared, will love us even as He loved him.

Is it asked why we thus follow Jesus, and receive so thankfully all that he tells us of God? Do people want to

know why it is that our religion makes us, at once, happy in ourselves and full of kind and brotherly thoughts to all good and true souls in all churches alike?

Surely, it must be for the simple reason that Jesus teaches us that God is more than a Creator, or a Sovereign, or a Judge.

Jesus constantly calls God his Father, and he bids all his sincere disciples in all ages, and in all lands, to pray to Him, and to call upon Him, as their Father who is in heaven.

That is why the beautiful religion we have learned from Christ makes our hearts happy in the midst of all our duties here on earth, and helps us to be very trustful, and hopeful, whenever God calls away from us the dear friends, one after another, whom we have loved so dearly in this life.

We think, as Christ bade us, of the great and good God as our Father.

And He is eternal, not only in his power, but in His almighty love no less; and that same love gives us hope when the memory of our wrongdoing oppresses us, and when we long for better life. The old scriptures, written long before the days of Christ, tell us that God willeth not the death of a single sinner; and Christ tells us more strongly and more comfortingly still, what we are to believe about God's compassion, and what a real Father He surely is to all of us, to the weak and to the sinful, as well as to the good, through the story of the Prodigal Son.

Well may we be happy and hopeful

as we listen to Jesus himself, and learn what he can tell us about our Father, and all His wise, and tender, and everlasting love for every creature of His hand.

Many are they who know the blessing of having for their own a loving earthly father—and who can rejoice, and feel secure in the thought of his sincerity, and unselfishness, and sympathy. All who know the joy of such a parent's care, cannot think of him as acting under any motive but that of a pure intention for the real and lasting good of the children he loves so dearly.

Jesus would have us think of these things, and draw comfort and trust from the thoughts that they inspire. Plainly and earnestly he declares to the people who came round him as he taught them on the hillside in Galilee: 'If ye then, being evil' (being imperfect, frail, short-sighted, and ignorant) —'If ye then—know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father, which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask Him?'

Now, all such teaching from Jesus speaks of the beautiful, paternal, and endless love of God that is as wide as the vast universe. A glorious faith Christ gave us to live, and to die in, for it is faith in the *love* of God, and we all rejoice to believe with the Apostle Paul, that nothing either in this world, or in the world to come 'shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'



Thus, then, we are led on by Jesus to believe that in that future world, this same love of God shall still, and forever, be triumphant over everything. He is our Father there, as surely as He is here and now. We believe that He will welcome every one of us home, at last, even as the parent in the parable welcomed the poor wandering child who went back to him; because 'God shall be all in all.'

No person, no evil, shall ever successfully dispute His power or His will. Sin shall at last be forever put away; its very results shall fade in the light of God's kingdom of righteousness, and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes there!

And when we seek to know, as all earnest hearts do at some time or other, how we are to realise fully the happiness that comes out of such a faith, the one all sufficient answer is—Try to follow Jesus,—to believe the beautiful teachings he uttered,—to bear witness unto truth as he did—to do our duty to our fellow-men,—and to do only those things to others, which we would that they should do unto us.

This it is to be in deed and in truth a Christian, and of all who come unto Jesus so, we may be very sure he will never cast out even one.

'Yes,' but earnest people who differ from us may say, 'You doubt so much that is regarded as true and as necessary to believe.'

And then, if they love us, or care

for us at all, they become anxious about us, and actually begin to fear that we shall be 'lost,' as the saying is. They have really been taught to think that it is a wicked thing to use our reason, and to question at all what a priest may presume to say. Then they tell us that if we do not believe on 'the Son' we are condemned already, and are endangered eternally.

Now, it is enough to ask all such kindly, but mistaken souls—'*Whom* do you think we doubt? What is it you are nervous about our doubting?'

We do not doubt that Christ is the son of God, and we accept his leadership. All that we say is that we simply take Jesus for our guide, rather than listen to everything that men have earnestly, but we believe, erroneously, said concerning him. In the New Testament, Jesus never tells us that he is God. He tells us that God is his Father. We do not doubt our Master: but we earnestly declare that if he is found saying one thing, while men who lived hundreds of years after him say a totally different thing, we needs must cling to the words of Christ before all else. God raised up Jesus, we believe; God gave him a message to deliver to man, and if we should dishonour Jesus and his message, we should dishonour the Father who sent him, and gave him that message to deliver. The more value we attach to the Bible, the more attentively we heed

the teaching of Christ, the more solemnly and surely we shall feel that if we are to be approved of God, we must just 'keep the commandments,' lead a simple and a faithful life, and love our neighbour as ourself, and God above all.

Nor can we too clearly or emphatically set forth the actual value which we attach to the Scriptures, or the spirit in which we examine their testimony. We study the Bible, not to discover what we may be told to find in it, but what we may fairly and impartially learn therefrom. We study it, as we study every book, carefully and thoroughly, in the light of history and of reason; and, therefore, our satisfaction is all the more real when we find it yielding naturally such support as it does to our own simple convictions of divine truth. In a word, the more searching our examination of the Bible, the more sustaining, and the more convincing will be its testimony for us. And it is surely a nobler thing to accept a statement as a truth which our minds and consciences approve, than for the reason that it happens to be found in any writings, however venerable these may be.

The wise Apostle Paul says that every man must be fully persuaded in his own mind; that is, every man must use the sacred gift of reason which God has given to us all: and if we are to be condemned for using that gift, for thinking for ourselves, for searching the scriptures, and for

coming to Christ through our own solemn convictions, how terrible is the perplexity, in which multitudes of the best and wisest people who have ever lived, are sadly and helplessly involved?

The great Church of Rome condemns all the Protestants. Of these Protestants, one sect differs from another. The Churchman condemns the Dissenter, and the Dissenter too often condemns those who do not entirely agree with him.

So the sad words of Christ come true again and again, when he declared that 'All this will they do because they have not known the Father, nor me.'

Jesus condemns no man for matters of doctrine. Jesus tells us of the love of God, and of the pity of God; and declares that it is quite useless for us to call him 'Lord! Lord!' and then to fail to practise his precepts.

Of course, we know that there are certain statements in a Creed, which is *called* indeed, the 'Creed of Athanasius.'

In that supposed 'Creed' we are told that if we do not keep 'the holy Catholic Faith'—which, certainly, Jesus never taught, or was cognizant of—we 'shall without doubt perish everlastingly.' But, then, we know that that Creed was not written until 600 years after Christ died, and we know, too, that even Athanasius never wrote it at all.

These things, we feel sure, we are quite right in doubting. The terrors

they threaten us with are not real. We put their erroneous statements aside altogether, and we turn to Jesus with his glorious religion of love. We bless his memory, for telling us that all of us are brethren, because God is the Father of us all. And therefore we rest, and we pray that all may rest at last, in these same thoughts about God, and about Christ, which cheer and comfort us. Our faith lifts us above all fear. It assures us that God rules by wisdom, and by love, and that He hateth nothing that He has made. And we believe, and are sure, that the life we lead, and the spirit we reveal are by the declaration, and the example of Jesus himself, the final and the essential grounds whereon we humbly yet trustfully look forward for blessing, and for acceptance at the hands of our Father in heaven.

AMBROSE N. BLATCHFORD.

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'We do elect the best,  
Let be the journey thither what it may.  
Who chooseth not the perfect, chooseth base,  
For "good" is bad, to better good preferred;  
And "truth" is falsehood, when divinest truth  
Wins not the heart, though seen.'

*The Babes of God.*—D. A. WASSON.

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'When the sun of one's happiness is set,  
one lights a candle called *Patience*, and  
guides one's footsteps by that.

*Polly Oliver's Problem.*—MRS. WIGGIN.



## Fairy Tales.

THEIR USE IN SUNDAY SCHOOL.

**F**AIRY TALES! What a charm dwells in those two simple words! They are a veritable 'Open Sesame' to every child; and what a world of wonders they disclose,—a world whose forests are all enchanted, whose mountains are the homes of gnomes, guarding jealously their hidden treasure of gold and gems; whose rivers are alive with kelpies and water-nixies, plotting untold mischief in the still, clear depths. Here, noble princes do doughty deeds on behalf of wondrously fair maidens, who in their turn suffer and endure gladly for love's sweet sake. The stern laws of the work-a-day world press with only a feather's weight, and 'to live happy ever after,' is the common lot of the dwellers therein.

Into this realm then—through which we all in turn have, or should have passed, and in which all have found delight—fairy tales open the gates,

The question now arises, 'Can these stories be made a means of teaching those principles on which so much of the blessedness and usefulness of life depends? Can children obtain from them a clear idea of what is meant by "duty"? Is there anything in them which will make children understand in some measure, however small, the reality and power of such things as Kindness, Mercy, Truth, and Love?'

1. In the first place, being stories, they are always interesting, and will therefore command attention; and the interest of the children, being once aroused, the difficulty of discipline, for *that* lesson, at least, is at an end.

It is this interest which a story always arouses, that has made the method of teaching by stories so successful. We know that in the childhood of the races of mankind, as well as of individuals, story-telling is a favourite practice, hence the mass of folk-lore of all nationalities. Savage tribes have always had their story-tellers to relate to them tales of warfare and wonder, even as Iagoo did at the wedding feast of Hiawatha; and they are favoured guests indeed who have the pleasure of hearing a tale so charming as the one told by the 'Wonderful Iagoo,' this 'marvellous story-teller.'

The minstrels, who were such favourites during the Middle Ages, were so because of their art of interesting by means of the recital of some strange tale of love or valour.

Since the wonderful invention of

printing, books have taken the place of the minstrels, and the favourite ones are the story-books. In the world of art the pictures liked best by the general public are those which tell their own story. As stories hold such a high position in the love of mankind we cannot afford to neglect the opportunity of making use of this common feature in our human nature. 'Straws show which way the wind blows,' and if we are wise we shall seize on this rapidly whirling straw and utilise it in our teaching. Christ made use of it, hence the parables; and these, it is scarcely too much to say, are the best remembered and most loved part of his teaching.

So much, then, for stories being used in teaching; but why particularly 'fairy' stories? First, because they interest children, and appeal to their imagination. The heroes and heroines are often children like themselves,—as in 'Snow-white and Rose-red,' 'Hansel and Gretel'; and, added to this, is the fact that they have, as a rule, a satisfactory ending; to such an extent, indeed, that 'to live happy ever after' has become the hall-mark of the genuine fairy-tale.

As stories, then, and particularly as 'fairy' stories, they are peculiarly suited for use in teaching children; but there are other reasons also which make them a valuable aid.

2. They are remarkably fitted for developing the *imagination* of children.

No one will deny the worth of this faculty of the human mind. Without



it, how can we form mind-pictures of distant lands and strange scenes which we have never seen and probably never will see? How can we bring ourselves into touch with the men and deeds of long ago, so that the dead page of history starts into life again as at the touch of some magician's wand? How can we conceive the vastness of space, with its unnumbered shining worlds, or the wonder and beauty and mystery of the whole universe, without its constant exercise? Then, too, *sympathy* is in a great degree dependent on this faculty. We may not have experienced the pain, sorrow, or loss with which we may be called upon to sympathise; and if we have not the power of imagination, how are we to put ourselves 'in his place'? how understand the feelings of the one we are desirous to help?

The realm of Poetry,—with its charm and its wealth of noble thought,—is a closed, or at least, a partially closed book to us if we lack this gift. The formation of an *Ideal* is largely dependent on how much of this faculty we can call our own; that ideal that should be to us as a distant sunlit peak, towards which we yearningly gaze, and up to which we slowly climb. We may perchance find our ideal in some warm, loving, living human soul, or we may choose one from among the multitude of those who have passed to 'where beyond these voices there is peace.' It matters not which, but in each case the lives of these chosen exemplars will not fit exactly into our

own. We must imagine how our life would have been lived by them, and how they would have acted in circumstances such as are being used to mould us.

The highest ideal is *Perfection*; and to reach that—to 'be perfect,'—we must form an idea of what perfection is; and this must always be *imagined*, for on earth it cannot be realised. Some of the best things life can give are dependent on imagination. Its sway is not over the things seen, which are only temporal, but over the unseen things which are eternal.

Before leaving this point, I should like to quote from an American paper that I happened to see while writing this essay.

#### THE CHILD'S IMAGINATION.

In all the various lines of study which grown people are following for the better comprehension of little children, it is seldom that enough place is given to the development of the imagination. In fact, much is being done unintentionally to dwarf its natural growth. The books which are written for children to-day, the plays invented for them, the stories told to them, are noticeably lacking in appeal to the child's innate creative sense.

So far as books are concerned, very many well-intentioned mothers have banished from the nursery shelves Hans Andersen, Grimm, even Lewis Carroll. Like Mr. Gradgrind, in Dickens' story, they want their children brought up on a diet of facts. This is because grown people, through necessary contact with the actual, have lost their imaginative power in a great degree, and with it the gift of sympathy. The reason why Hans Andersen could enter, when a man, into the

children's kingdom was because he had never ceased to be a child.

Many charming stories for children are written to-day concerning good little boys and bad little boys; science is put in story-book form; poems 'fit for children' are laboriously brought to their level. . . . I tried the other day to talk to a little boy of five as I had been talked to; but I found that we spoke a different language. He knew what bees were doing in the flowers, and why a dewdrop showed rainbow hues, but he had never heard of a fairy or a dwarf. He will grow up a wise child, but he never will weep because the mermaid has dissolved in foam; he will not shudder with Sintram at the forest shapes, or even laugh at the merry company in Alice in Wonderland. His introduction to the Rhine gold will be through the medium of opera, and illimitable space will never open out before him upon a spotted paper. And the worst of it all is that he will never know that he has missed anything. The Chinese may bind a child's foot and do less harm than we who bind the brain. —*Grace Duffield Goodwin*, in *Boston Congregationalist*.

Fairy-tales, too, may be used in giving lessons on 'Kindness to Animals.'

There are many ways of teaching this, of course. Allowing children to keep pets and attend to their little wants themselves, is an admirable way, —perhaps the very best way. But we cannot afford to lose any real help in our work; and in how many fairy-tales do we find vivid illustrations for such lessons, stories in which animals gratefully remember some act of kindness, and repay it a hundredfold when the opportunity for doing so comes to them.

The birds that sorted the seeds for the forlorn maiden, the reindeer

that carried loving little Gerda across the snowy waste in search of poor, misguided, hard-hearted, little Kaye; the bears that gave their fur for a warm covering to the man who had befriended them; the nightingale that sang so sweetly that the dying king revived—these are all examples of this method of illustrating our lesson.

We all know that it is impossible for such things to happen; but the mere telling of such stories will familiarise the children with the proper way to treat our animal friends, and that is the chief object to be gained. For they will copy what they see by the eye of imagination as readily as what they see by their own eyes; and that they are admirable mimics everybody acknowledges.

Lastly, it is a well-known axiom in the theory of teaching, that we must proceed from the known to the unknown, from the concrete to the abstract.

Now fairy stories present almost invariably some abstract quality in a concrete form. Cruelty, revenge, hatred, etc., are embodied in some terrible monster which must be slain before goodness, mercy, or kindness, in the form of some prince or princess, can be liberated to shed their sweet influence abroad. Conscience is a difficult thing to explain to children, but tell them of the prince who possessed a wonderful jewel which shone with a strange brilliancy whenever he was on the right path, but paled whenever he was about to go wrong; or of the prin-

cess whose fairy godmother gave her some snow-white doves which kept their purity so long as she was good, but changed to a dull grey which grew darker and darker whenever she was naughty; and I think, when the necessity of explaining conscience arises, the meaning will be more easily grasped. Children will like to think that they, too, have got a precious jewel that will grow brighter or duller according to right use or neglect.

Then there are so many stories which are splendid as illustrations for lessons on Endurance, Unselfishness, Perseverance, and other virtues; which, presented to children in the abstract would be, if not meaningless, uninteresting; and because of this would fail to make a lasting impression.

There is, in the end, only one way of making children love goodness and hate evil. They must in some way or other be made to *see* the beauty of the one and the ugliness of the other. Unless they do this, they will not love what is good and true for its own sake alone. Now fairy tales make this beauty and ugliness stand out in bold relief and in colours such as children can appreciate. For grown-up people these colours may be too crude, but the finer shades do not appeal to children. Of course a great deal depends on the choice of the story. To take any fairy tale haphazard,—the first one to hand,—would not answer the purpose at all. There are many of them that one would not, on any account, use in this way.

Determine what quality or virtue the lesson is to be about and then choose a suitable story, one in which this quality is embodied in the hero or heroine. Do not mention the virtue by name as a virtue at all, but tell the story, making it as interesting as possible. Then ask questions which will bring out the lesson to be learned, without putting it as a moral. For instance, take the well-known tale of 'Pearls, Diamonds, and Toads.' The teacher wishes the children to realise how beautiful are the words of kindness, and how ugly are those which are unkind and spiteful.

The story must be simply told. There were two sisters—or, to be more correct,—'Once upon a time' there were two sisters. The one goes to the well for water, meets an old woman; is asked for a drink; and gives it, with a few kind words. Instantly pearls, diamonds, and precious stones drop one after the other from her lips. The second sister also wends her way to the well—is also asked for a drink by the same old woman; refuses it, in unkind words. In a moment down come toads, frogs, spiders, and beetles in a shower from her mouth.

With a few questions draw from them what is meant by the pearls and diamonds and the frogs and toads. It seems too obvious to us grown-ups to need explanation, but try it with tiny children. It is like a revelation to them when they find out what the frogs and diamonds mean. Their eyes, to use fairy tale language, will become

'big as saucers'; and, unconsciously to themselves, they will come to associate kind words with nice things like sparkling diamonds, and unkind ones with long-legged spiders, of which, as Miss Muffet has informed us all, children are very much afraid.

Again, boys and girls are apt to overestimate the value of gold, and to despise 'common' things.

Tell them the story of the man who obtained a magic wand that would turn everything it touched to gold. Then shew what a dreadful state of things ensued, and how glad all were to get their dear old earth back to its former condition again, with its covering of black, dirty-looking soil, for this yielded something far more precious to man than gold, such as the magic wand gave.

This will teach them, more than any amount of mere telling would do, that there are things in the world of far more value than gold.

Hans Andersen is a perfect mine for suitable tales; as for example, *The Little Fir Tree* that was never satisfied with the good gifts it possessed, and only valued them as they became a memory. *The Wild Swans*, a lovely tale of sisterly affection and devotion. *The Ugly Duckling* that bore its sufferings so patiently, and that everybody praised so highly in the end for being what it had really been all the time, if they could only have seen.

As children get older and the wonder and mystery of real life grows upon them, these tales are naturally put somewhat on one side, but 'for old

sake's sake' they will never lose their charm; so that, when the time comes 'to put away childish things,' these will find a place in some sunny niche among the many pleasant Memories of Childhood;

'Where thoughts are singing swallows,  
And the brooks of morning run.'

MARY LATHAM.

## Thrift.



ONE of the most important lessons that we can teach our young people and ourselves is the duty of being prepared for the 'rainy day'; and it is therefore, in my opinion, that the Savings Bank has a fitting place in our Sunday Schools.

But this is not enough; the question of joining some provident society or club should be frequently brought before our elder scholars. For all kinds of curious mistakes arise in connection with this subject; one will answer quite brightly to our question, 'Do you belong to a club?' with 'Oh, yes; mother has put us all in; so that there will be quite enough to bury us;' while a wife will perhaps say with quiet disapproval, 'No, I don't hold with such things; it only means spending lots of evenings in a public-house.' Unfortunately there is too frequently a great deal of truth in this latter statement; for under the name of provident clubs a great many unworthy as well as unstable societies are formed, which do much harm.



But neither the burial nor the convivial clubs are really conducive to thrift. We do need, if our weekly wage is small, to have some health insurance, as we may call it; whereby each one pays something every year in order that, when illness comes, he may have the assistance of the doctor, and some compensation for lack of wages. On the other hand, there are so many tempting circulars put forth by very questionable club promoters that it may easily happen that we are persuaded to join one of these; then, when trouble and distress come, we find that our share is not forthcoming; either because there are not sufficient funds, or owing to some technical formality which, we are told, has been overlooked. Of course, there are some long-established and excellent clubs, but these are very few compared with the many unsatisfactory ones.

During the last year I have been extremely interested in *The National Deposit Friendly Society*; and its method seems to me to be so good that I should like to say something about it to the readers of *THE HELPER*.

This society started—as all good things do—on a small scale, in the village of Albury, in Surrey, on the suggestion and with the practical help of Canon Portal, who had been connected with a similar scheme for some years before, in Hampshire. This was over thirty years ago. Gradually its usefulness became recognised, and the good work spread over other parts of the country, until in 1872 it was regis-

tered under the title given above; and there are now more than 34,000 members, and an invested fund of £155,000.

The special features of this society are briefly these:—

1. All persons between 7 and 55, of both sexes, may join.

2. Each member can choose his or her doctor. The rules with regard to medical attendance are excellent. Instead of choosing a club doctor and paying him at the rate of 3s. or 4s. a head annually—the usual but most unsatisfactory proceeding for both parties—a scale of charges is made up; so much for each visit, etc., etc.; and any doctor chosen by the sick member, who is willing to accept this scale, is allowed to attend; and he sends in his account to the central authorities as to an ordinary patient.

3. The society is intended, not only as a provident club, in case of illness, but also as a savings bank; for the former cannot cover times of need through want of work, and therefore savings are necessary for him who really desires not to be ‘over-anxious for the morrow.’ A member begins, therefore, to put something into the bank as well as to pay his monthly instalment. And in order to do away with the necessity of a reserve fund, or an increased monthly payment (and also to prevent malingers from imposing on the funds), a portion of the sick allowance is taken from the member’s own savings in the bank.

This sounds strange at first, but the hardship is only apparent. For it

means that the year's provident subscriptions have a smaller demand made upon them, so that at the end of the year there is a larger balance over. And what is done with this balance? It is divided out according to the number of the members, and nearly the whole of this quota is added to their private savings bank account. Nearly, but not quite all; for a small sum is deducted, and this is sufficient for these three things to which it is devoted :—

- (a) To pay expenses of management.
- (b) To enable the member to have a small yearly annuity after the age of 70.
- (c) To give £3 at death of member.

4. The centralisation of the funds. Most of the Friendly Societies keep their accounts separate, each lodge or district having its separate treasury. Therefore it may easily come about,—through an epidemic in the locality, or some other cause—that the funds of a special lodge become exhausted before the claims upon it have been met. With centralisation, local disturbances are not of such vital importance.

Of course, it would be impossible to do more here than to give in outline the special features of this carefully worked out scheme; but I trust many of our friends will be sufficiently interested in the society to wish to know more. There are now branches in many cities, towns, and villages, and further information will be gladly given by Mr. F. Litchfield, Secretary, 11, Red Lion Square, Holborn, London, W.C.

## Rémi and Arthur.

### TWO METHODS OF TEACHING: A LESSON FOR OURSELVES.

THE following extract is from Hector Malot's capital story, *SANS FAMILLE*. Rémi is a poor lad, whose master gives street entertainments with performing dogs and a monkey. The master, who has been a good friend to Rémi, having been sent to prison through the petty spite of a police officer, the boy has now to take charge of the 'troupe'; and, after many hardships, is fortunate enough to attract the notice of Mrs. Mulligan and her son.

Arthur Mulligan is suffering from spinal disease, and so has to lie down always; and in order to give change of scene and interest to her boy, his mother has chartered a barge, on which they go up and down the rivers and canals. Rémi is invited to spend a few days with them.

Mrs. Mulligan is intensely devoted to her son, and is anxious that his mind should be properly trained; so day by day she gives him a lesson. But Arthur seems as if he cannot apply himself to learn; and on the first morning of Rémi's visit the good mother's patience is sorely tried by his not being able to remember the little fable that he had been told to learn. She turns to leave Arthur to learn the lesson alone; then she comes back again.

Rémi, who tells the story, goes on as follows :—

'Shall we try to learn it together, Arthur?' said Mrs. Mulligan.

'Oh, yes, mother; together.'

Then she sat down by his side, and taking the book began to read the fable softly. It was called 'The Wolf and the Lamb.' Arthur repeated the words and the phrases after her. When she had read the fable through three times she gave Arthur the book, and left him

to finish learning it, while she went about her other duties.

Arthur again took up the fable, and from where I was I could see his lips moving. It was evident that he was applying himself to his task.

But this application did not last long; soon his eyes were lifted above his book, his lips moved more slowly, and presently their movement ceased altogether.

His eyes, wandering here and there, caught mine. With my hand I pointed to his book, and with a sweet smile, as if he thanked me for my reminder, his eyes went back to the page.

Again and again the same thing happened; and at last he spoke to me.

'I can't help it,' said he, 'and yet I do want to learn the lesson.'

I drew near. 'And yet this fable is not difficult,' I said.

'It is, though,' he replied; 'it is very difficult.'

'It seemed easy to me; after hearing your mother read it, I thought I could have said it.'

He smiled doubtfully at me.

'Shall I say it to you?'

'That would be impossible.'

'No, not at all impossible; take the book and hear me.'

He took the book, and I began to say the fable; he only needed to correct me three or four times.

'Why, you know it,' he cried.

'Not very well; but now I think I could say it perfectly.'

'But how did you learn it?'

'I heard your mother read it; and

I listened attentively, without looking at what was going on around me.'

Arthur reddened and turned away his eyes; then, after a moment, he went on: 'I understand how you have listened,' said he; 'but how do you manage to retain the words which seem so misty in my brain?'

How had I managed? I scarcely knew, for I had not thought much about it. But I tried to think it over, so that I might answer him.

'Well, what is the fable about? I first asked myself. About the sheep. Then I begun to think about sheep. Then I thought about what they were doing; "they were in safety in their fold." I pictured to myself the sheep lying down and sleeping happily because they were in safety; and having seen them, I did not forget.'

'Good!' exclaimed Arthur; '"the sheep were in safety in their fold." Yes, I see them; some white, some black; I see the sheep and the lambs; I see the fold too, with hurdles all round it.'

'Then you won't forget it?'

'Oh, no.'

'Next, who usually guards the sheep?'

'Dogs.'

'And when they are not wanted to guard the sheep, because they are safely in the fold, what will the dogs do?'

'They will have nothing to do.'

'Then they may go to sleep. So we say "the dogs slept."'

'That's it; it is easy!'

'Yes, is it not? Now we will think

of something else. Who takes care of the sheep with the dogs ?'

'A shepherd.'

'And if the sheep are safely in the fold, how can he employ himself ?'

'He may play on his flute.'

'Can you see him ?'

'Yes.'

'Where is he ?'

'Under the shadow of a large elm tree.'

'Is he alone ?'

'No, other shepherds are with him.'

'Then if you see the sheep, the fold, the dogs, and the shepherd, cannot you repeat the fable ?'

'Perhaps I can.'

'Well, then, try.'

Arthur had looked at me with some emotion, almost fear, as he listened while I showed him how a difficult lesson might become easy; he seemed only half convinced even now; but after a few moments of hesitation he commenced, and repeated what he had learnt without a mistake, clapping his hands as he finished.

Then I asked him: 'Would you like to learn the rest of the fable in the same way ?'

'Yes, yes; I know I can learn it with you. Mother will be so glad!'

And in less than a quarter of an hour Arthur had thoroughly mastered the whole fable; and on Mrs. Mulligan's return, to her great delight, he repeated it without hesitation or mistake.

'It is Rémi who has taught it to me,' he said. 'The *words*, they are nothing; but *things*, these we can see. And Rémi made me see the shepherd and his flute; when I raised my eyes I did not notice the things around, for I was looking at the shepherd, and hearing the air he was playing. Listen, mother, I can even sing you the shepherd's song.' And Arthur began to sing a little plaintive air.

Mrs. Mulligan's eyes filled with tears as she bent over her son and enfolded him in her embrace; then she turned to me and, gently pressing my hand, said, 'You are a good boy, Rémi.'

I have given the account of this morning at some length, because it marked a great change in my position. Until then I had been considered but as the 'leader of a troupe,' useful only as a means of amusing a sick boy; henceforth I was separated, as it were, from dogs and monkeys, and was regarded by Arthur as a companion, almost as a friend.





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